Giant Spider & Me

A Post-Apocalyptic Tale 2

story & art by
Kikori Morino

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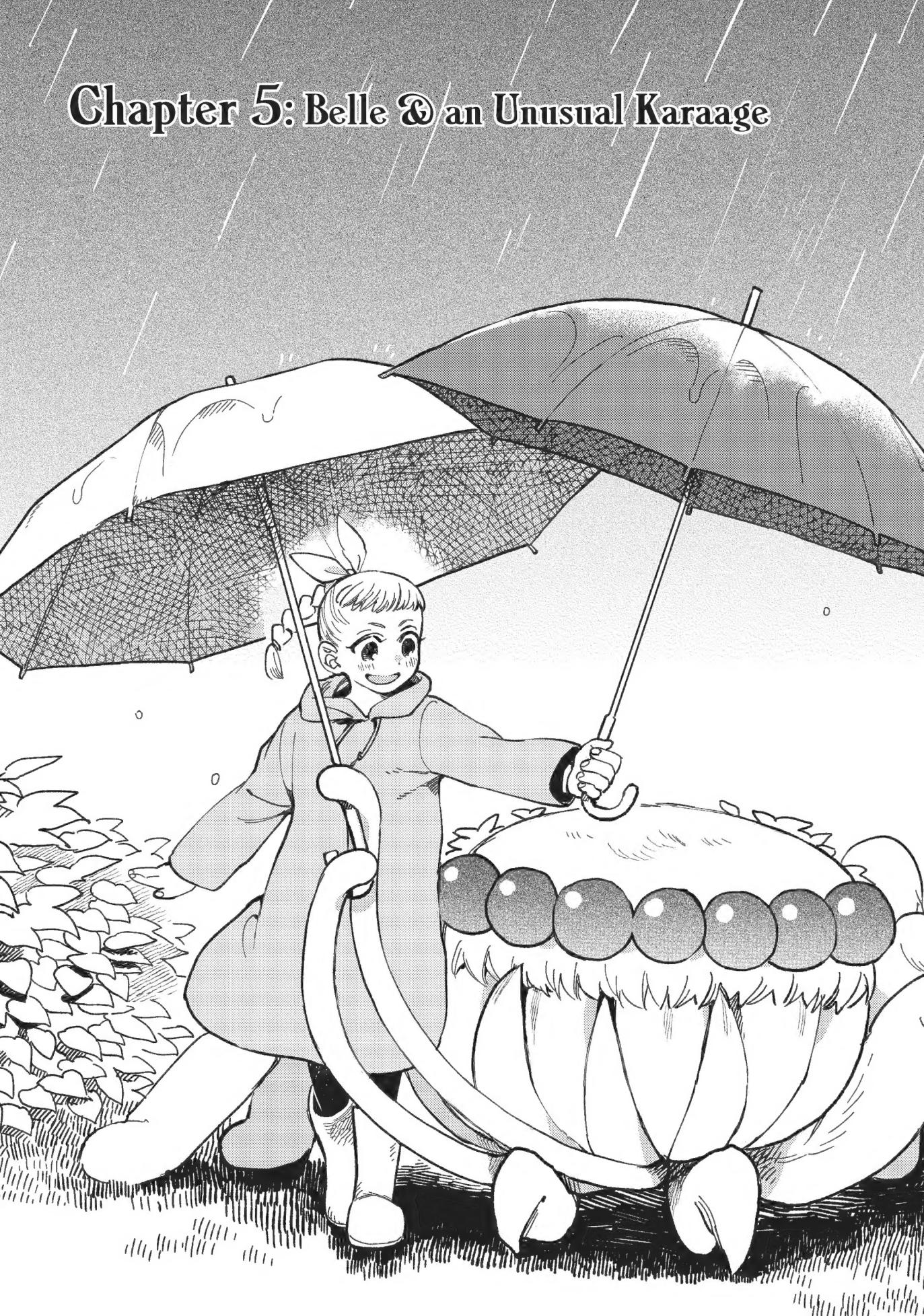
Chapter 5: Belle & an Unusual Karaage



FFSSSSSSSHH
HUH ...?
CH
I SAID GET BACK...
YOU MON-STER!
WHAT, DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME?
OK

HOLD ON!!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
RESCUING YOU, OBVIOUSLY!
I'LL KEEP THEM OCCUPIED!
YOU HURRY UP AND RUN!
OKAY, NOW, JUST SLOW DOWN.
I did not see this coming.
THESE TWO AREN'T A THREAT.
I HAVEN'T BEEN KIDNAPPED OR ANYTHING. IT'S ALL GOOD. PUT THE GUN DOWN.
SERIOUSLY?
SOMETIMES YOU'RE SO NICE IT MAKES YOU STUPID!
I'LL BUY THAT THE GIRL'S NOT A THREAT...
BUT THAT THING IS OBVIOUSLY A MONSTER!

NO, IT'S REALLY NOT. I CAN TELL YOU EXACTLY WHAT'S GOING ON.
SIGH...
CALM DOWN AND LISTEN, WILL YOU?
KSH

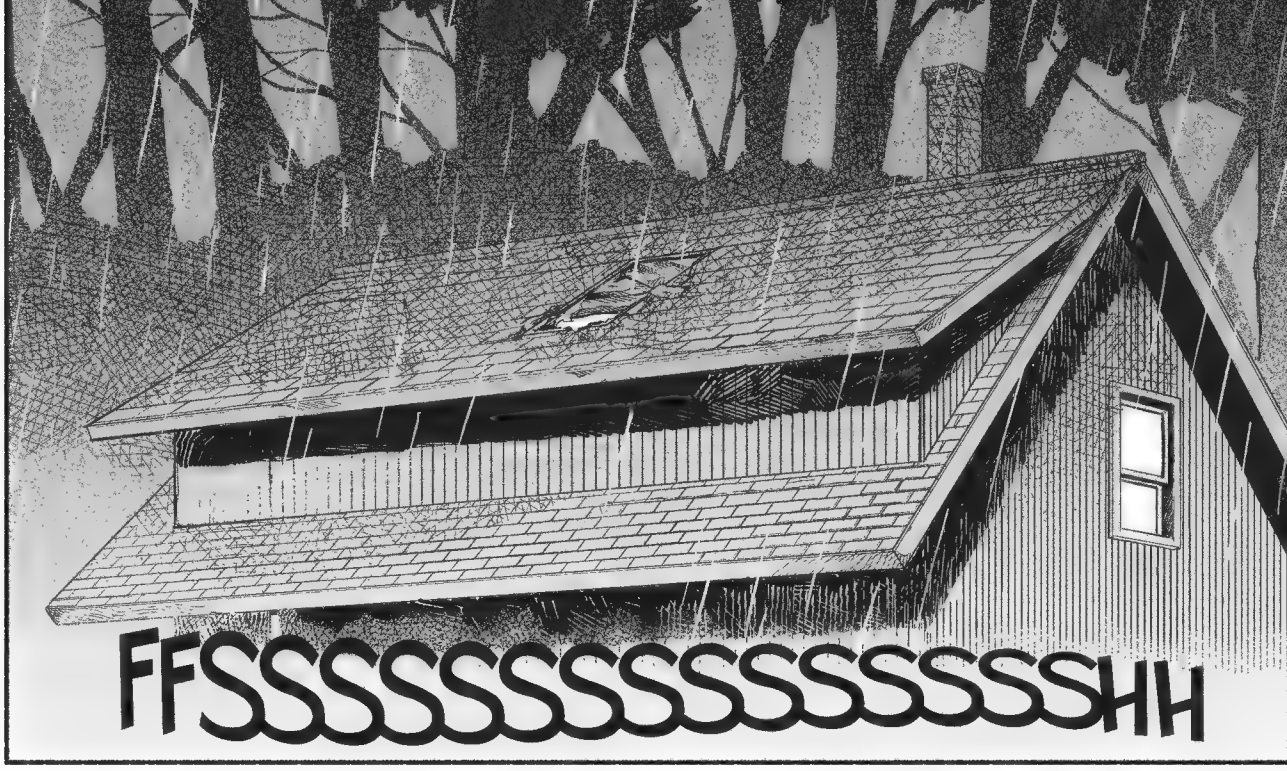
?!
STOP IT!
DON'T POINT THAT THING AT ASA!
GRR!!!
WHAT'S WITH YOU?!
SQUISH
MOVE, WILL YOU?!
ARE YOU TRYING TO GET SHOT?!

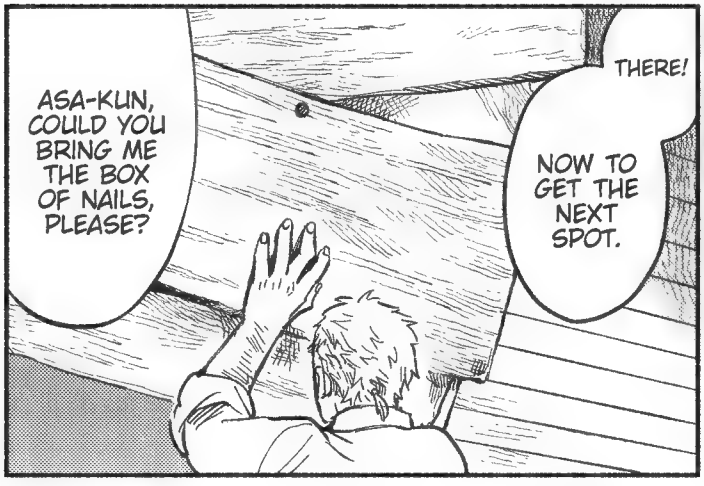
THAT. IS. ENOUGH.
GIVE IT HERE.
.....
ONLY FOOLS WAVE GUNS AROUND AND THREATEN PEOPLE.
FSH
WHAT-EVER. IT'S JUNK.
BETCHA IT'S NOT EVEN LOADED.
I TAUGHT YOU TO USE THEM ONLY AS IMMEDIATE SELF-DEFENSE.

.....
WHERE'D YOU FIND THIS THING?
YOU KNOW. AROUND.
IT WAS JUST LYING THERE WITH THIS MASK.
WHEW...
ASA...
!
POKE
I'M SO SORRY ABOUT THIS, NAGI-CHAN.
SHE WASN'T TRYING TO HURT YOU. SHE WANTED TO PROTECT ME, AND...
SOME-TIMES SHE GETS A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY, THAT'S ALL.

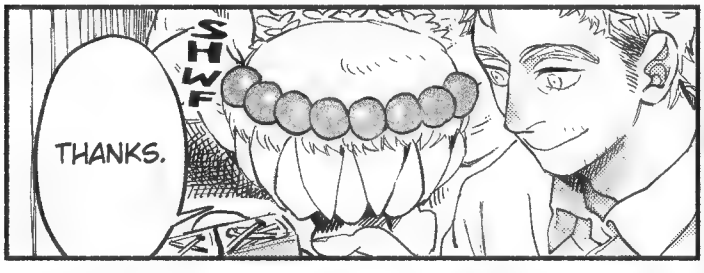
SO... I GUESS YOU KNOW HER, HUH?
HMM? OH.
TO PUT IT MILDLY, YEAH.
SHWF
THAT'S MY DAUGHTER, BELLE.

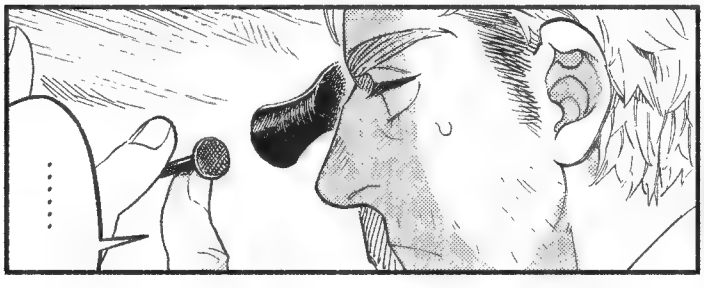
HI
POINT
ANYWAY, DAD...
TUG
WHAT'RE YOU STARING AT?
"DAUGHTER"?!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO LEFT YOUR DARLING DAUGHTER ALL ALONE IN TOWN!
YOU'D BETTER HAVE AN AWFULLY GOOD EXPLA-NATION!
NOW I'M SOAKED TO THE BONE AND FREEZING!
Yes, dear.
I WANT HOT TEA!
Right now!!


FFSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSHH


ASA-KUN, COULD YOU BRING ME THE BOX OF NAILS, PLEASE?
THERE! NOW TO GET THE NEXT SPOT.

BAM
BAM


SHWF
THANKS.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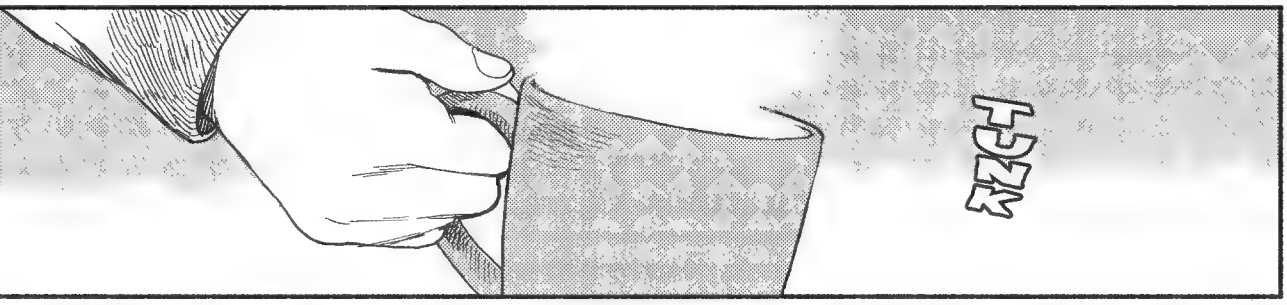
I HOPE THE GIRLS ARE GETTING ALONG OKAY.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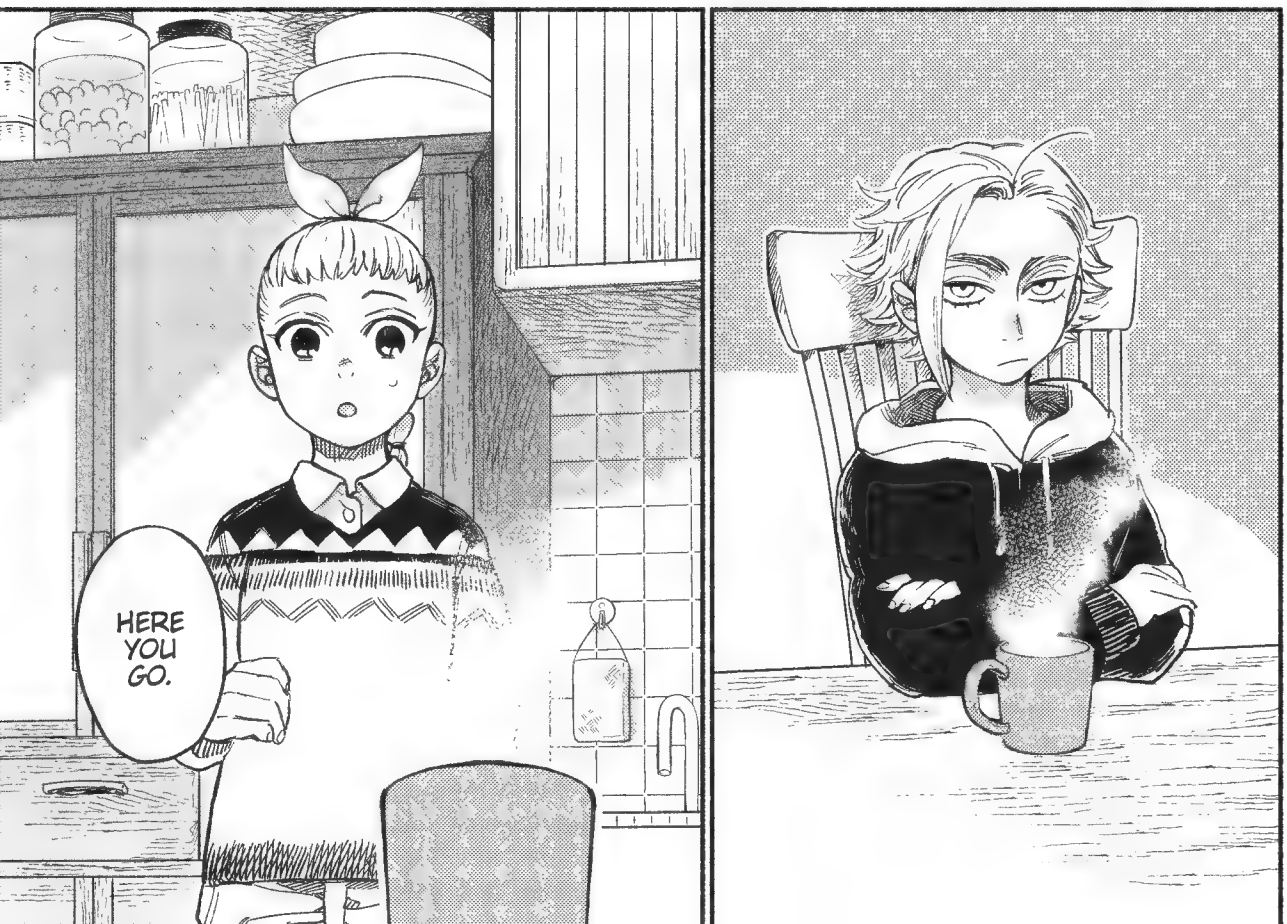
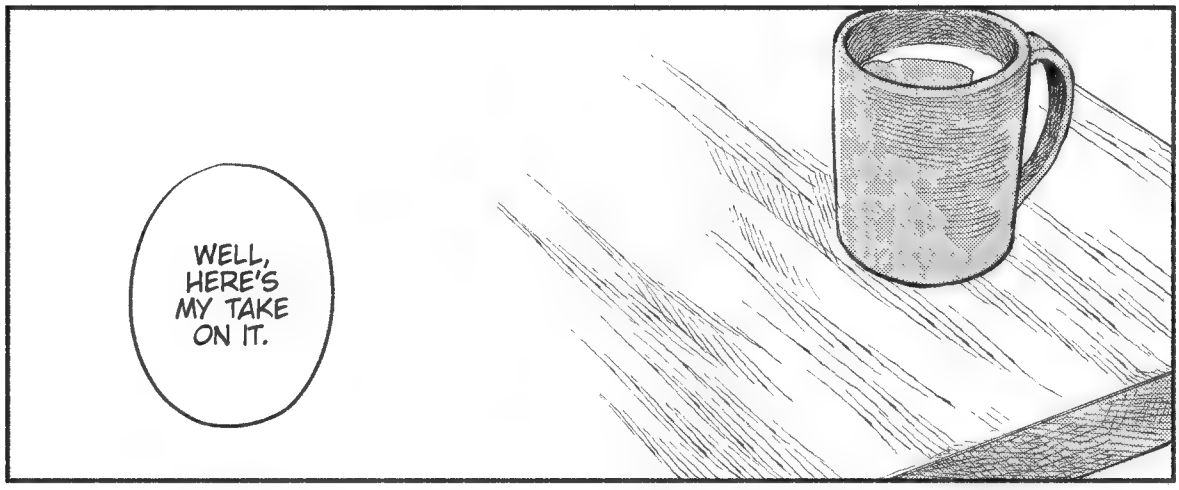

HERE YOU GO.

OH! YOU DON'T TAKE BLACK TEA PLAIN?
I HAVE SUGAR IF YOU'D LIKE...
IT'S FINE!
IT'S NOT SWEET.
SIP
I HATE WHEN PEOPLE ARE ALL FORMAL AND STUFF.
STOP TALKING LIKE SOME STUFFY OLD LADY.
STOP HOVERING AND SIT DOWN, WILL YOU?
TUNK

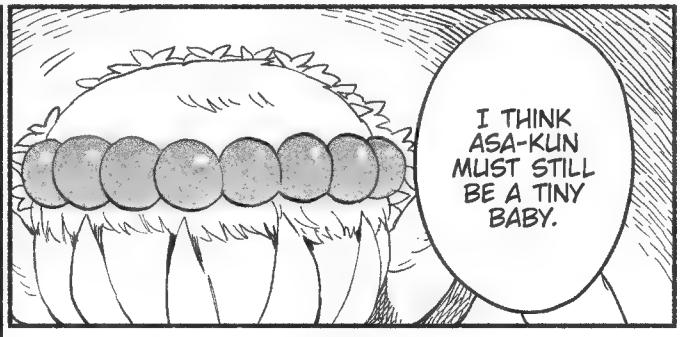
UM... OKAY.
I WAS SO SURE SOME WEIRDO OLD DUDE LIVED OUT HERE.
INSTEAD YOU'RE YOUNGER THAN ME...
AND WAY WEIRDER THAN I EXPECTED.
I'VE GOT A BAJILLION QUESTIONS, BUT...
LET'S START WITH THE OBVIOUS ONE: WHAT THE HECK IS THAT GIANT SPIDER?!
SOME KIND OF LOCAL SPECIES?

YOU'RE SAYIN'...
YOU LET THAT THING INTO YOUR HOUSE AND YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS?!
UM?
HUH ?!
I DID ALL THE RESEARCH I COULD, BUT NOTHING I FOUND LOOKED LIKE ASA.
I DON'T THINK SO.
Stupid...?
Y- YOU THINK SO?
YES!!
UNBELIEV-ABLE!
IF YOU'RE NOT DOING IT FOR A REASON...
THEN YOU'RE WAY PAST BEING STUPIDLY NICE! THAT'S JUST PLAIN STUPID!!
I wouldn't've believed there's anyone less cautious than Dad, but here you are!
CAN'T YOU TELL BY LOOK-ING?!
THAT THING'S OBVIOUSLY A PREDATOR!

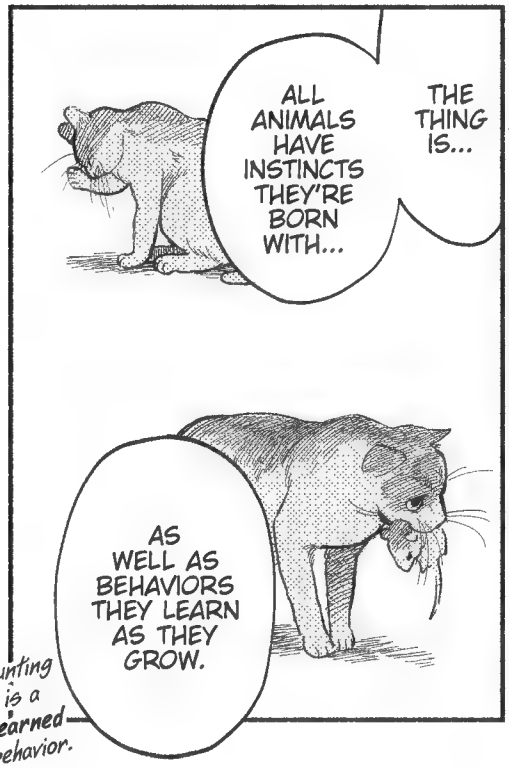
IT COULD SWALLOW AN ADULT HUMAN IN ONE GULP!
AND THE MOST OBVIOUS CLUE IS THAT HUGE TOOTHY MAW!!
LOOK! THAT GLINTING ROW OF EYES LETS IT SPOT PREY NO MATTER WHERE IT HIDES!
THOSE EIGHT LEGS MAKE IT NIMBLE ENOUGH TO DART IN ANY DIRECTION!
SHISH
STOP SPINNING IT SO OPTIMISTI-CALLY!!
YOU'RE RIGHT, TOO. ASA IS INCREDIBLY CURIOUS, AND GETS INTO TROUBLE EASILY, AND IS ALWAYS HUNGRY.
WOW! YOU'RE REALLY OBSER-VANT, HUH?
DAD--!
THIS GIRL IS UN-BELIEV-ABLE!
SWEAT SWEAT...
NOW, NOW. PLAY NICE, WILL YOU?

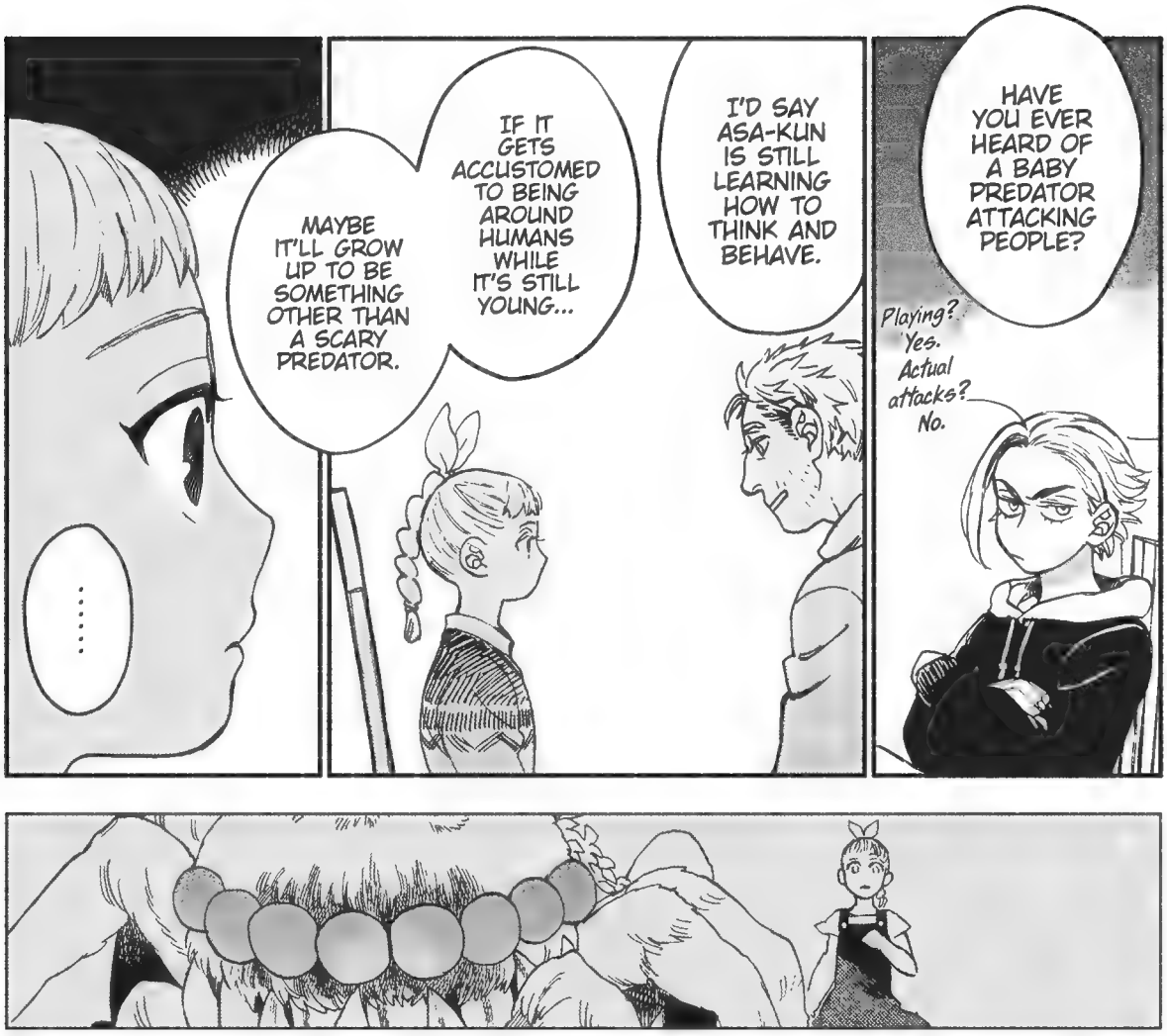

WELL, HERE'S MY TAKE ON IT.

IT DOESN'T KNOW HOW ITS KIND LIVES OUT IN THE WILD.
Basically...


I THINK ASA-KUN MUST STILL BE A TINY BABY.

A BABY...?
AT THAT SIZE...?


THE THING IS...
ALL ANIMALS HAVE INSTINCTS THEY'RE BORN WITH...
AS WELL AS BEHAVIORS THEY LEARN AS THEY GROW.
Hunting is a learned behavior.


HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A BABY PREDATOR ATTACKING PEOPLE?
Playing? Yes. Actual attacks? No.
I'D SAY ASA-KUN IS STILL LEARNING HOW TO THINK AND BEHAVE.
IF IT GETS ACCUSTOMED TO BEING AROUND HUMANS WHILE IT'S STILL YOUNG...
MAYBE IT'LL GROW UP TO BE SOMETHING OTHER THAN A SCARY PREDATOR.
.....

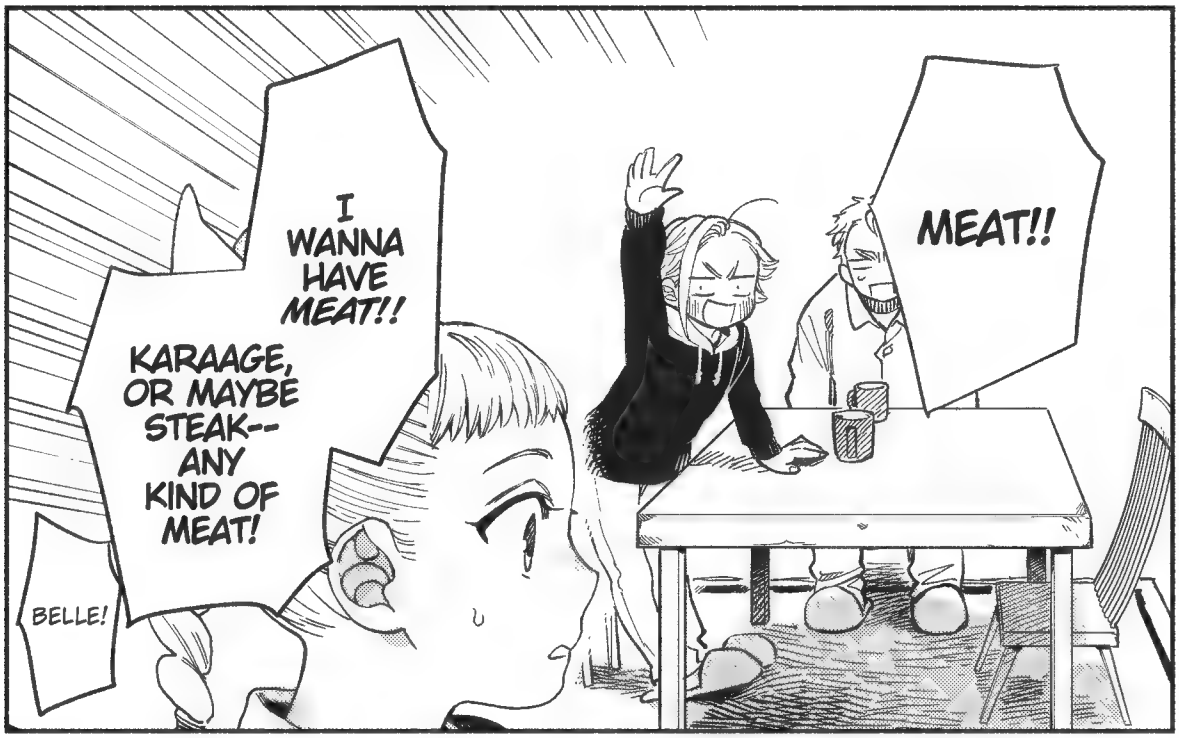
ARE YOU SAYING THAT IF ASA GREW UP LEARNING TO LIVE IN THE WILD...
THEY MIGHT'VE SEEN ME AS PREY...?

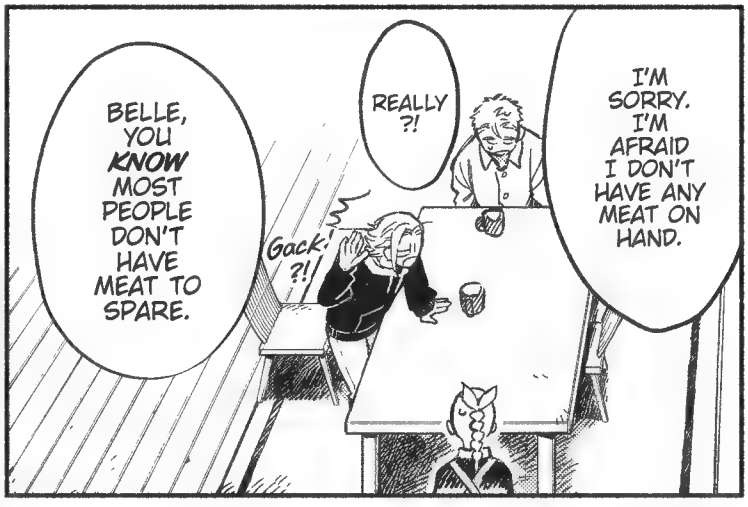
I CAN'T COMMENT ON HOW THINGS WERE BEFORE YOU TWO MET.
BUT YOU HAVE MET, AND NOW YOU LIVE TOGETHER.
PAT
EVEN IF THEY'RE FROM DIFFERENT SPECIES...
INDIVIDUALS WHO TRULY TRUST EACH OTHER WILL ALSO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.

YEAH...
HM?
OHO! ARE WE FRIENDS NOW TOO, ASA-KUN?
Ha ha ha!
HMPH. SO STUPID.

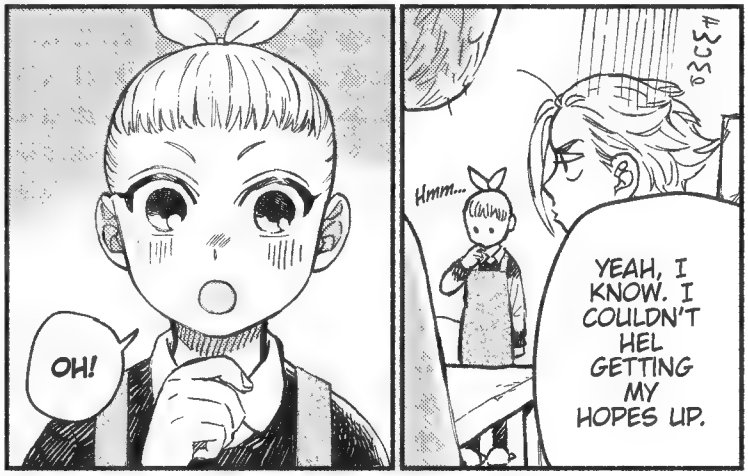
GUURRRGLLLLLLLLLL

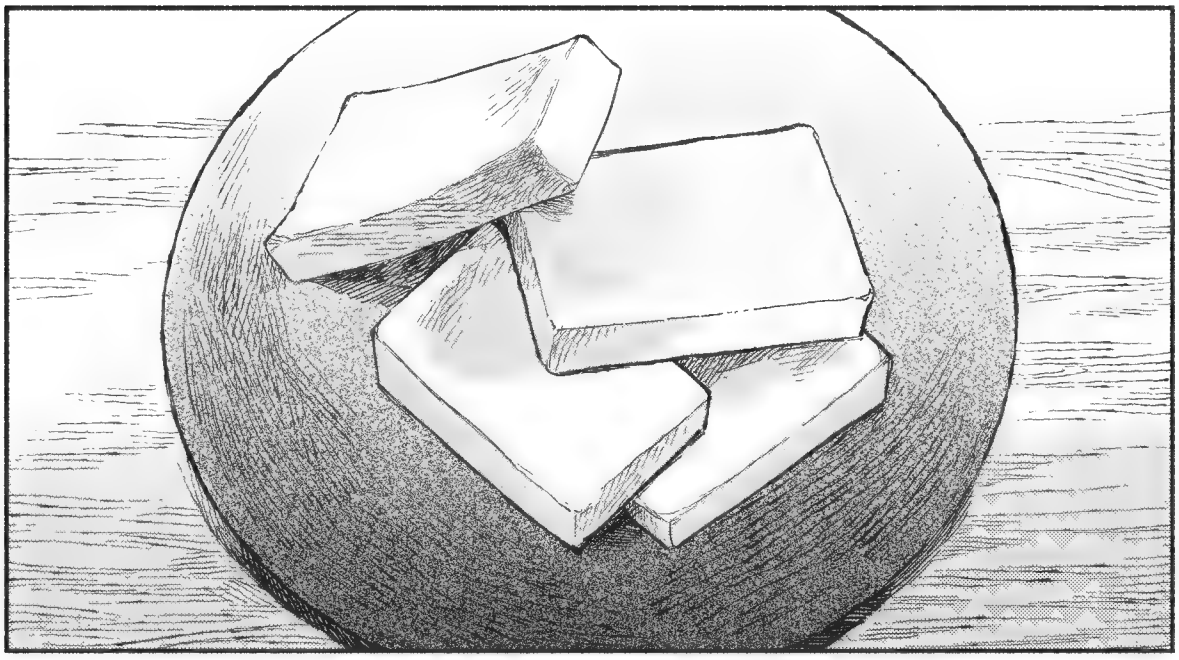
ANY REQUESTS?
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE?
ER...
HEH! WELL, OUR STOMACHS ALL AGREE ON SOMETHING.
I-I'LL GO MAKE SOME FOOD, THEN!
OOH! YOU'RE TAKING REQUESTS?!
KTUNK

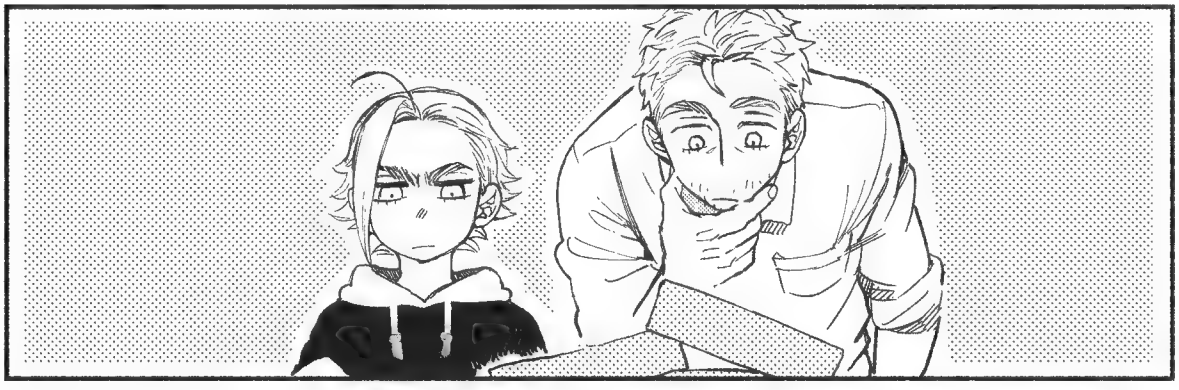

MEAT!!
I WANNA HAVE MEAT!!
KARAAGE, OR MAYBE STEAK-- ANY KIND OF MEAT!
BELLE!

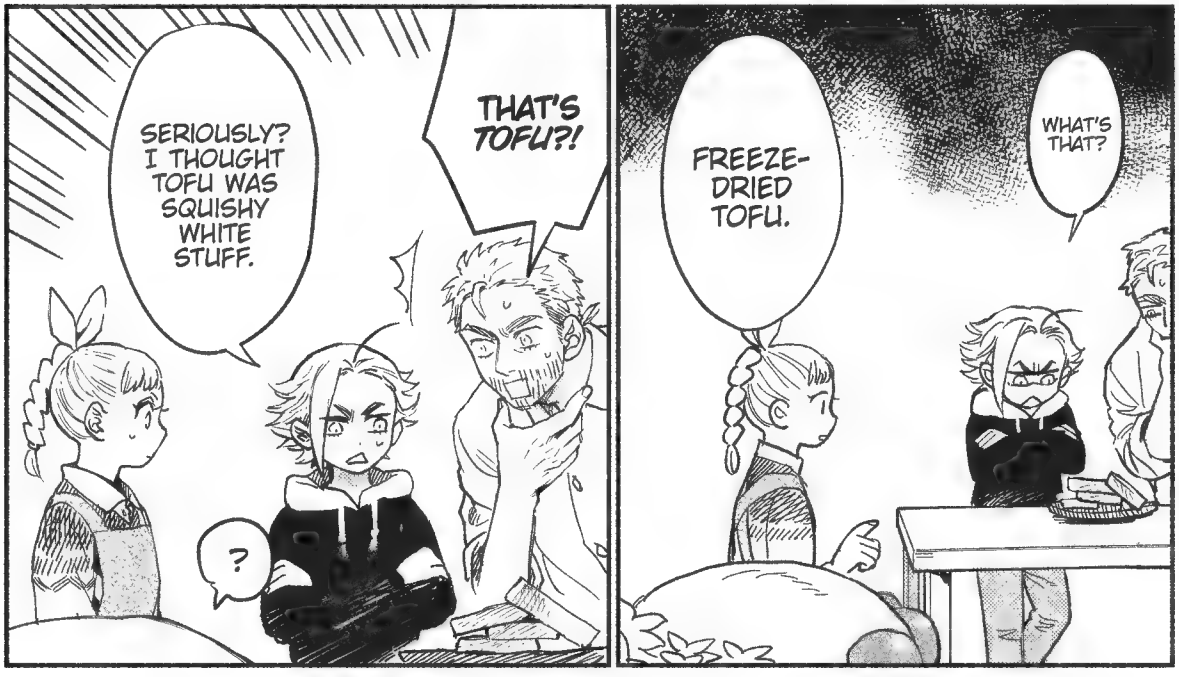

I'M SORRY. I'M AFRAID I DON'T HAVE ANY MEAT ON HAND.
REALLY ?!
Gack! ?!
BELLE, YOU KNOW MOST PEOPLE DON'T HAVE MEAT TO SPARE.

I DON'T HAVE ANY ACTUAL MEAT...
BUT I MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE SOMETHING A LOT LIKE IT!
"A LOT LIKE" MEAT...?

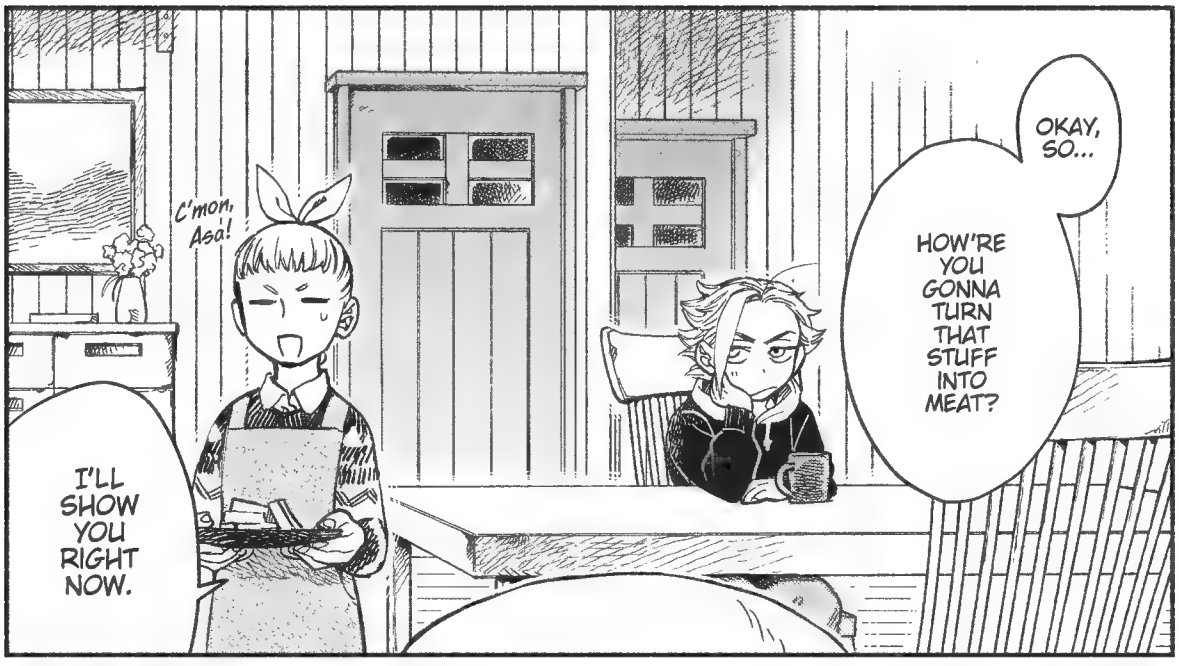

OH!
Hmm...
YEAH, I KNOW. I COULDN'T HEL GETTING MY HOPES UP.

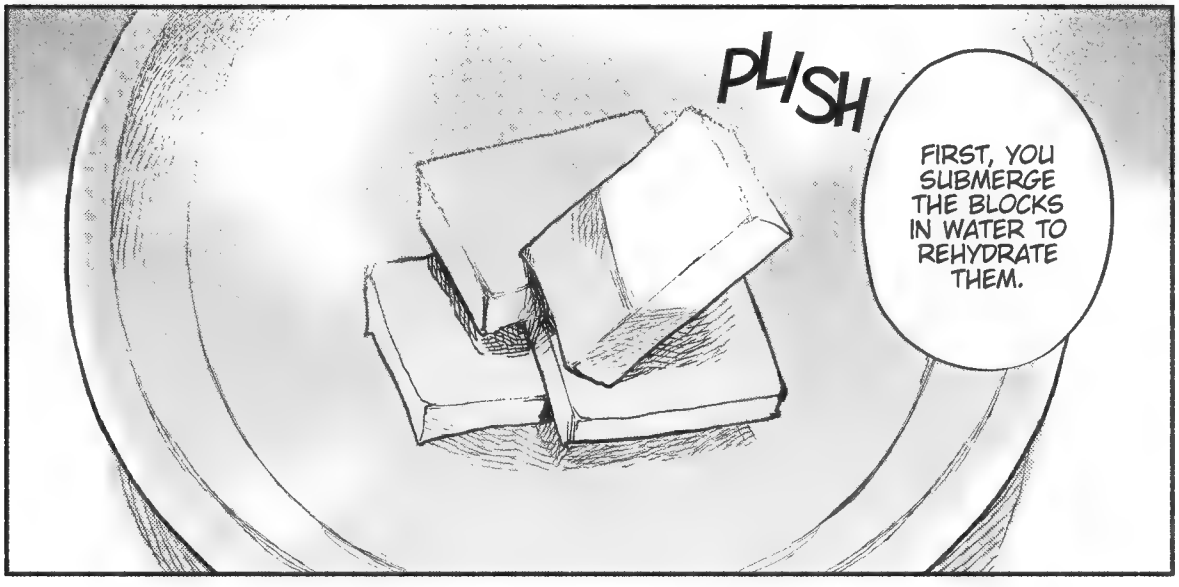





WHAT'S THAT?
FREEZE-DRIED TOFU.
THAT'S TOFU?!
SERIOUSLY? I THOUGHT TOFU WAS SQUISHY WHITE STUFF.
?

FRESH TOFU IS, YES, BUT THIS IS *PRESERVED* TOFU.
IT GETS CUT INTO BLOCKS AND FROZEN, AND THEN IT'S DRIED AT LOW TEMPERATURES.
SO... LIKE TOFU JERKY OR SOMETHING?
Um...
IN THE SENSE THAT THEY'RE BOTH DRIED FOODS, I GUESS...
The tofu's frozen first, though.
FREEZING TOFU, HUH?
I WONDER WHO THOUGHT OF TRYING THAT?
WELL...
IT'S BEEN DONE FOR AGES. I'VE HEARD IT WAS DISCOVERED ACCIDENTALLY IN A COLD CLIMATE.
IT WAS AN *ACCI-DENT?!* WOW.
FWOOOO

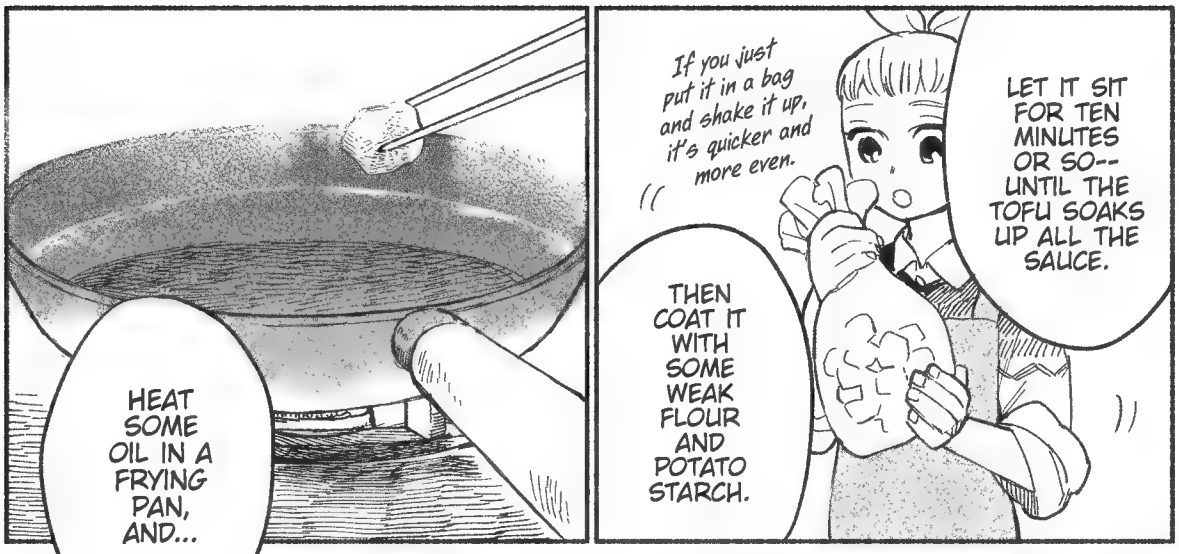

OKAY, SO...
HOW'RE YOU GONNA TURN THAT STUFF INTO MEAT?
C'mon, Asa!
I'LL SHOW YOU RIGHT NOW.


PLISH
FIRST, YOU SUBMERGE THE BLOCKS IN WATER TO REHYDRATE THEM.

ONCE THEY'RE NICE AND PUFFY, YOU SQUEEZE OUT ANY EXCESS WATER...
THEN RIP THEM INTO BITE-SIZED PIECES.

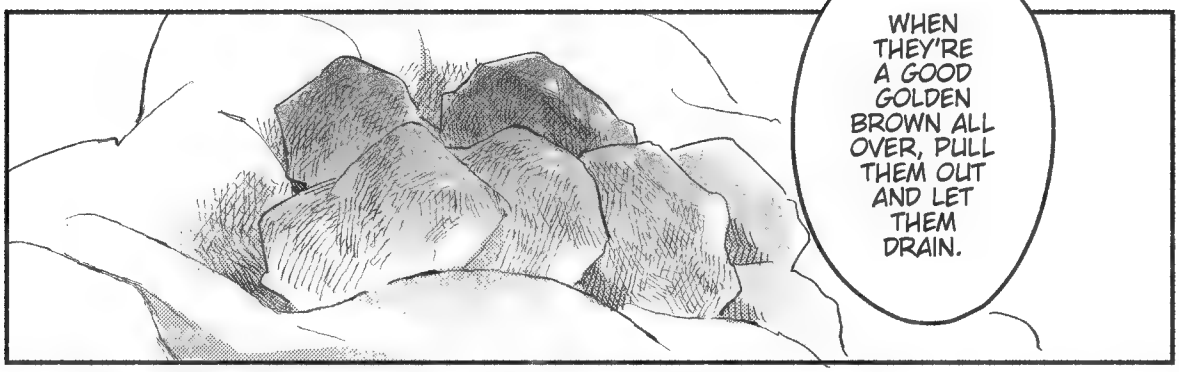
PWUFF

FIRST SOME GRATED GINGER AND GARLIC...
NEXT WE PREP THE SEASON-INGS.
SKFF SKFF
THEN WE'LL MIX SOY SAUCE, COOKING SAKE, AND SESAME OIL, AND BLEND IN THE GRATED INGREDI-ENTS.
POUR THAT OVER THE TOFU PIECES, AND THEN...
MIX IT UP SO THE SAUCE COVERS THEM ALL EVENLY.
Garlic and ginger...
THAT'S ALREADY SMELLING AWFULLY GOOD...


LET IT SIT FOR TEN MINUTES OR SO-- UNTIL THE TOFU SOAKS UP ALL THE SAUCE.
If you just put it in a bag and shake it up, it's quicker and more even.
THEN COAT IT WITH SOME WEAK FLOUR AND POTATO STARCH.
HEAT SOME OIL IN A FRYING PAN, AND...

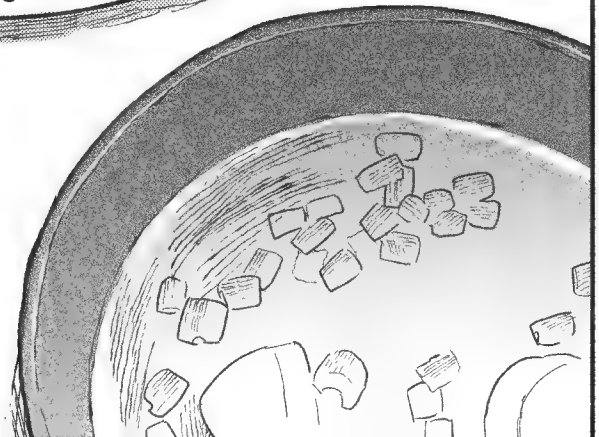
TOSS IN THE TOFU!
SIIIZZZZZ
ウウウウウ

IT'S REALLY EASY TO BURN, SO YOU HAVE TO KEEP THEM MOVING WHILE THEY FRY.
SIZZ
Mmmm, look! You can see how the pieces're browning up nicely.
TH-THMP
TH-THMP



FREEZE-DRIED TOFU KARAAGE

4 blocks freeze-dried tofu
2 tablespoons sake
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2/3 tablespoon sesame oil
1 teaspoon grated ginger
1 teaspoon grated garlic
weak (low-gluten) wheat flour
potato starch
vegetable oil



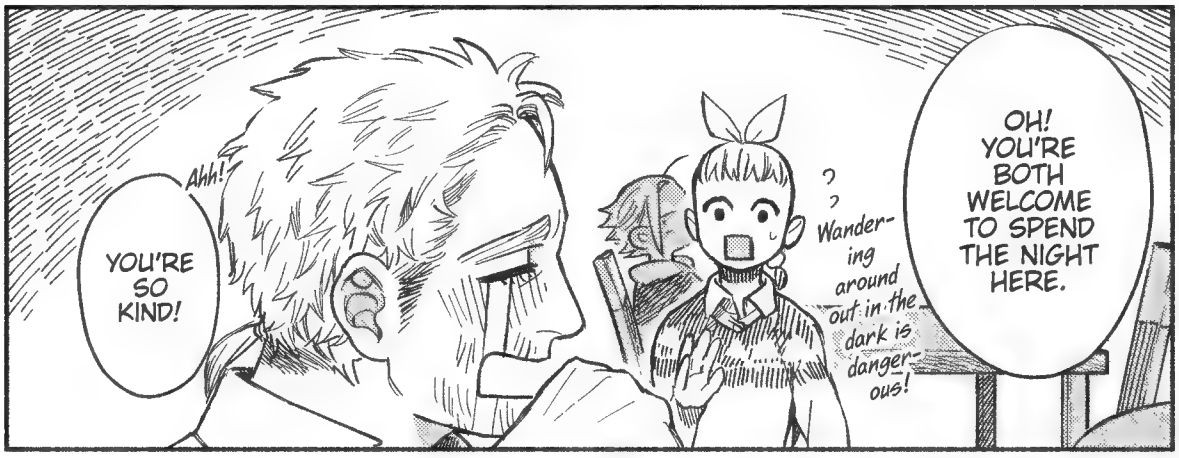
LET'S SEE HOW IT TASTES.
HUNH.
GULP...
IT DOES KINDA LOOK LIKE REAL KARAAGE CHICKEN, EVEN THOUGH IT'S TOFU.

MUNCH
MN?!

FREEZE-DRIED TOFU'S LIKE A SPONGE!
IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG FOR IT TO SOAK EVERY-THING UP.
AHA! THAT MAKES SENSE.
TOSS
TOSS
WHAT THE HECK?! THEY'RE FLUFFY AND JUICY AND CRISPY...!
And they still taste just like karaage chicken!
MM, YUM! THE SEASON-INGS HAVE SOAKED RIGHT THROUGH EACH PIECE.
WOW, THESE ARE REALLY GOOD!!
Hey! Don't steal mine!
Yum! Dad, gimme a bite!
THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD!

WE COMPLETELY LOST TRACK OF TIME. IT'S ALREADY FULL DARK.
Shoot!

?
Heh!
You're not at all like I figured at first.
Y'KNOW, YOU'RE PRETTY DARN GOOD!

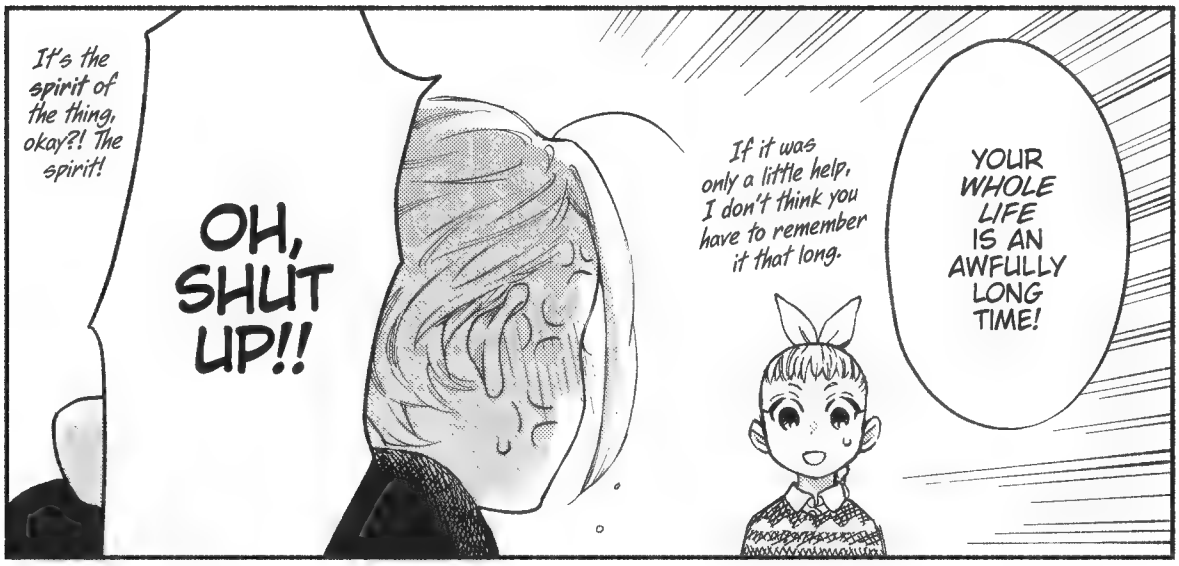

Ahh!
YOU'RE SO KIND!
? ?
Wandering around out in the dark is dangerous!
OH! YOU'RE BOTH WELCOME TO SPEND THE NIGHT HERE.

AH.
WE'LL ASK AROUND TO SEE IF SOMEONE'S WILLING TO COME FIX IT.
Um...
TOMORROW I'LL TAKE ASA TO TOWN.

OH, RIGHT...
HAVE YOU DECIDED WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE HOLE IN YOUR ROOF?

ASKING AROUND GOES FASTER WITH MORE THAN ONE PERSON DOING IT.
HMM.
SO...
TOMOR-ROW...
I'LL HELP OUT WITH THAT, NAGI.

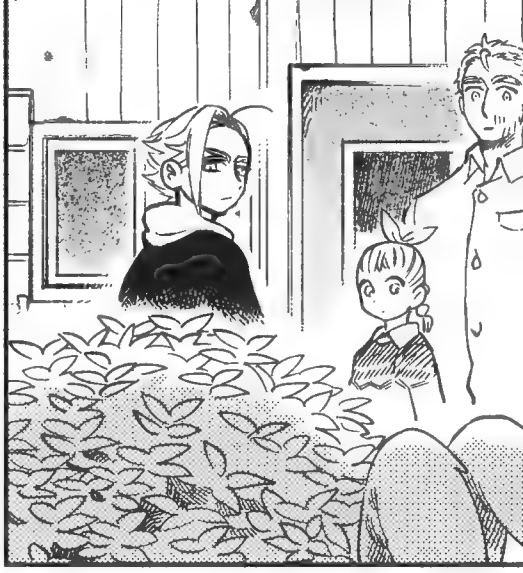
Just call me Belle.
NAH, DON'T SWEAT IT.
CALL IT PAYBACK FOR A GOOD MEAL AND A PLACE TO SLEEP.
I can't ask you to do that!
B-BUT...
WE ONLY JUST MET, BELLE-SAN!
HUH?
EVEN IF SOMEONE HELPS YOU JUST ONE TIME, YOU REMEMBER IT FOR YOUR WHOLE LIFE!
RIGHT?
THAT'S BEEN THE TRADITION IN THIS COUNTRY FOR AGES!
JAB

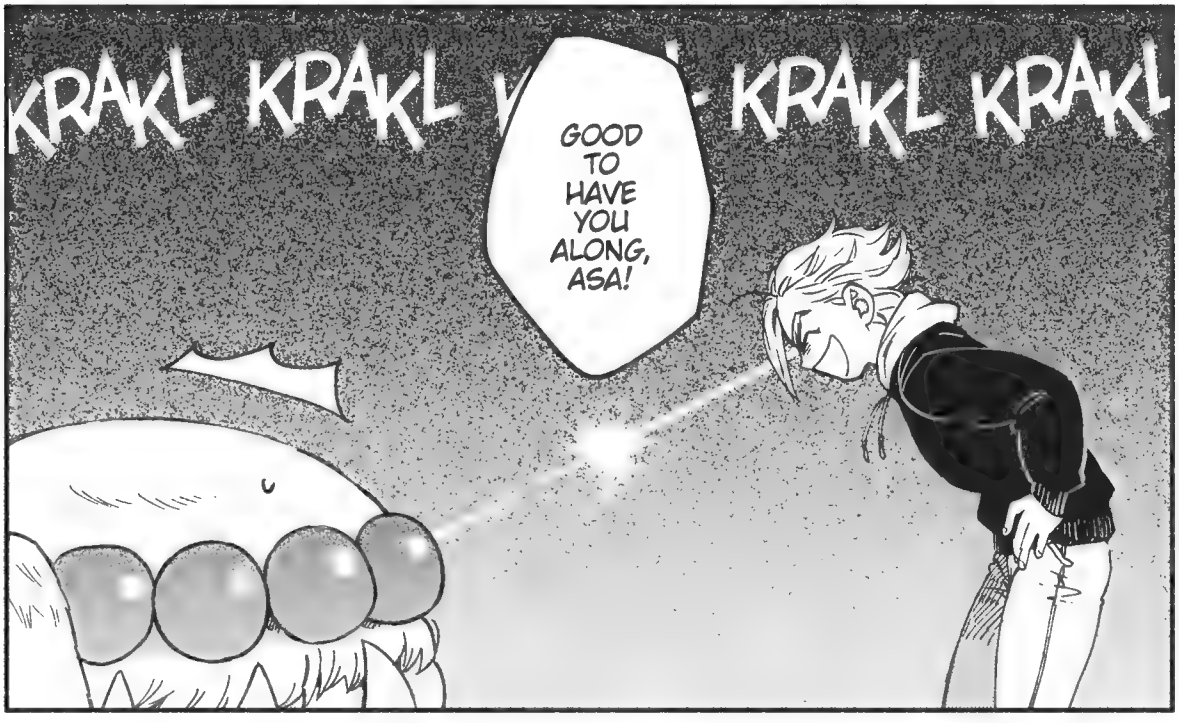

It's the spirit of the thing, okay?! The spirit!
OH, SHUT UP!!
If it was only a little help, I don't think you have to remember it that long.
YOUR WHOLE LIFE IS AN AWFULLY LONG TIME!

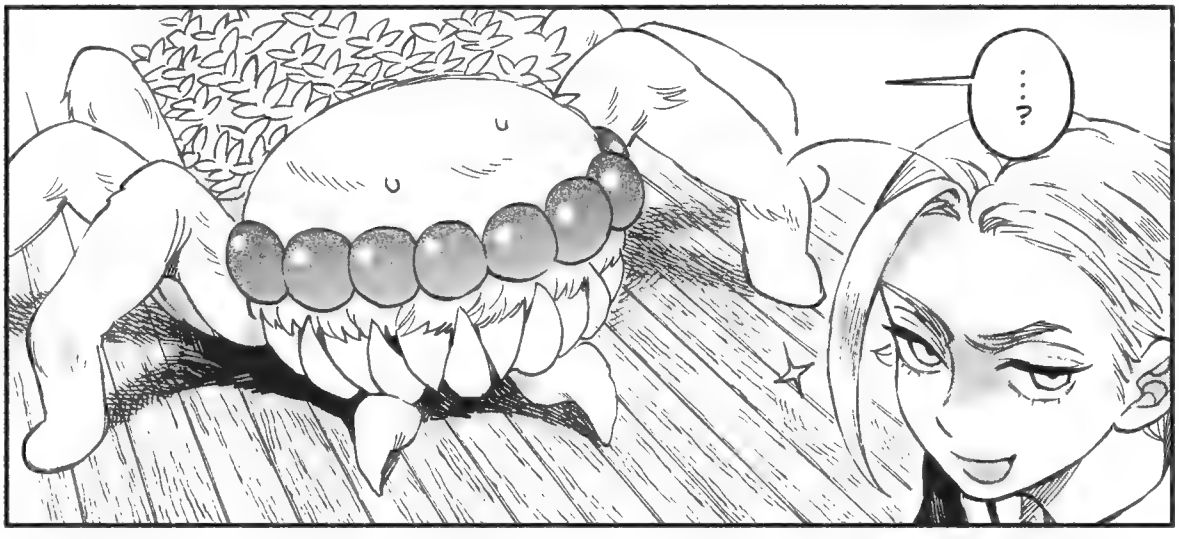
TMP...
YOU'D BETTER BE HELPING TOO, DAD!
WELL, YES. I FIGURED.

STOP BEING SO FUSSY! JUST SAY...
"THANKS, BELLE! THAT'S SO NICE OF YOU!
"I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR HELP!"
GOT IT?!
FIDGET FIDGET...
O-OKAY...

OKAY, IT'S A PLAN.




KRAKL KRAKL
KRAKL KRAKL
GOOD TO HAVE YOU ALONG, ASA!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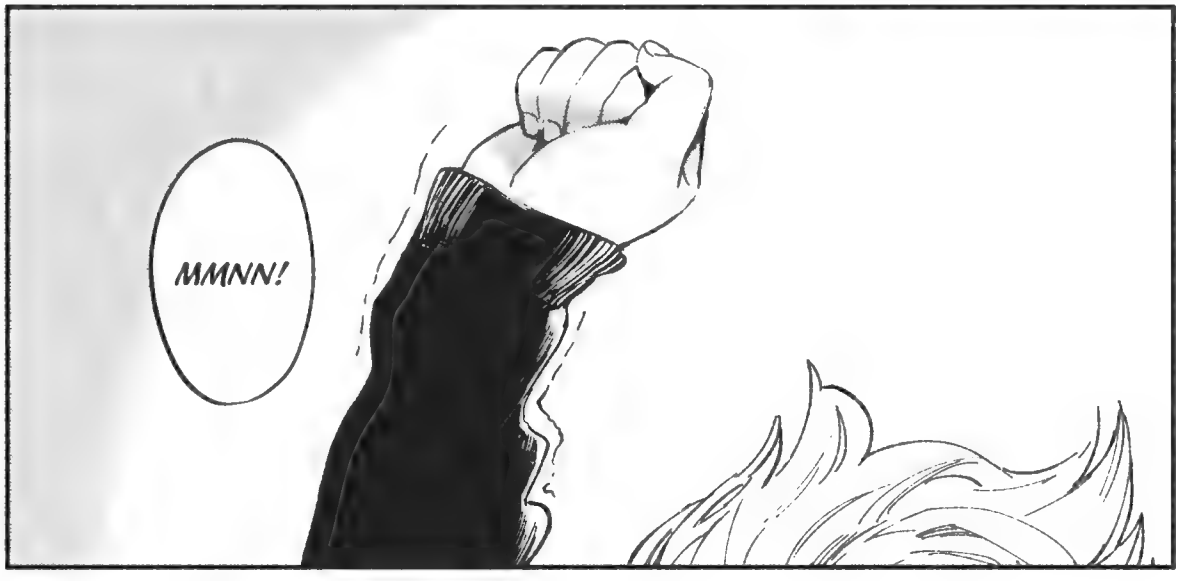
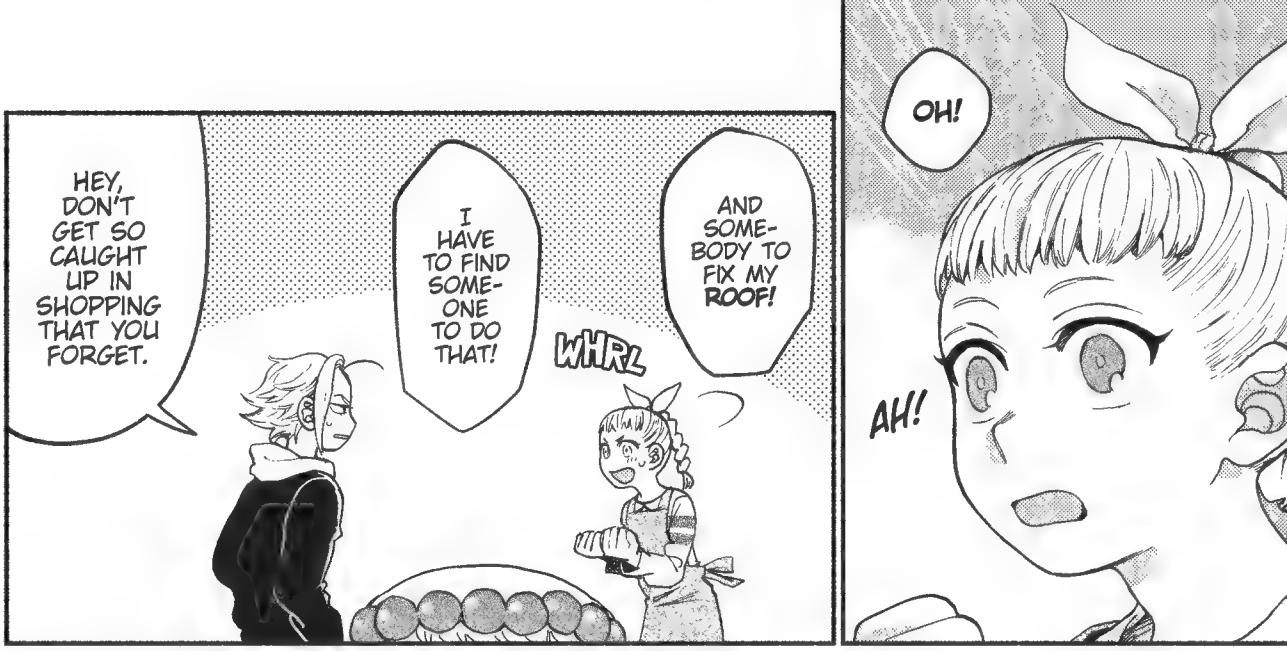
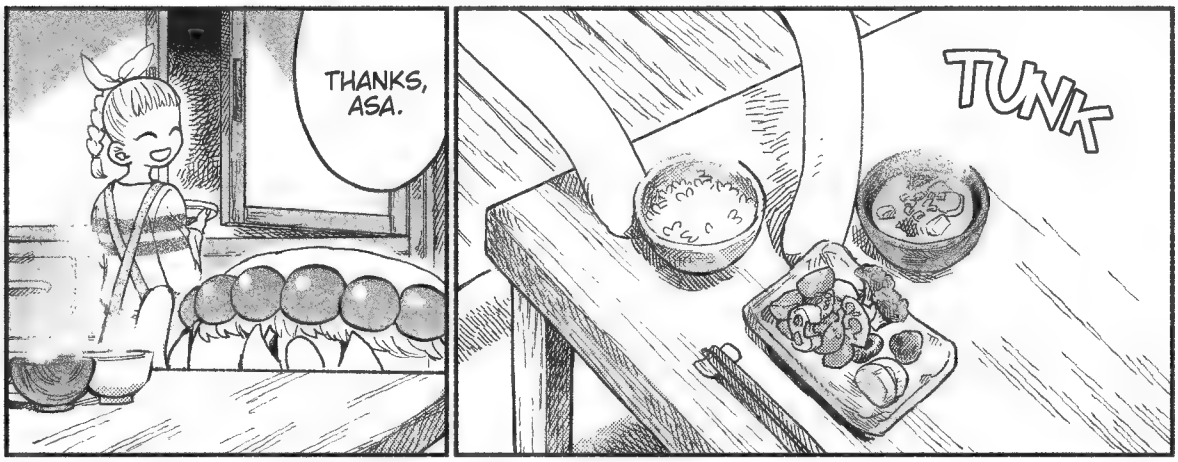
Chapter 6: Morning Market & Walnut Soup


MMNN!

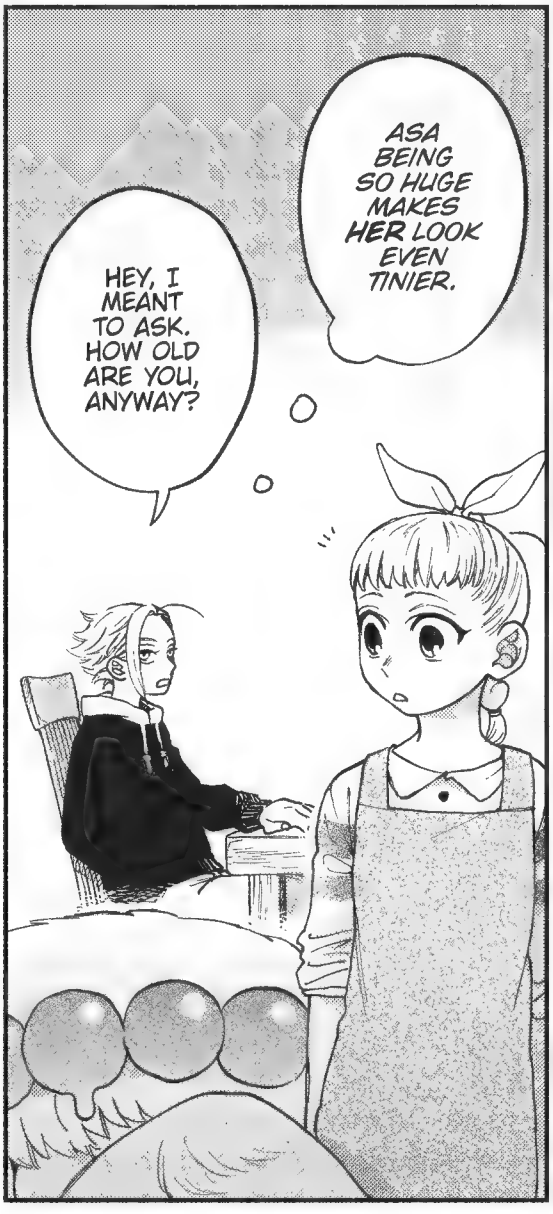
GOOD MORNING! DID YOU SLEEP WELL?
UH-HUH. BUT BOY, YOU SURE GET UP EARLY!
It's only 5:30!
YAWN...
I THOUGHT WE MIGHT AS WELL HIT THE MORNING MARKET WHILE WE'RE AT IT.
YEAH.
THE MORNING MARKET?
BRIGHT COLORFUL FRUITS AND VEGGIES!
FRESH SEAFOOD AND POULTRY!
PLUS, ALL KINDS OF ODDS AND ENDS!
IF WE'RE GOING SHOPPING, EARLIER IS BETTER!


HEY, DON'T GET SO CAUGHT UP IN SHOPPING THAT YOU FORGET.
I HAVE TO FIND SOME-ONE TO DO THAT!
AND SOME-BODY TO FIX MY ROOF!
WHRL
OH!
AH!

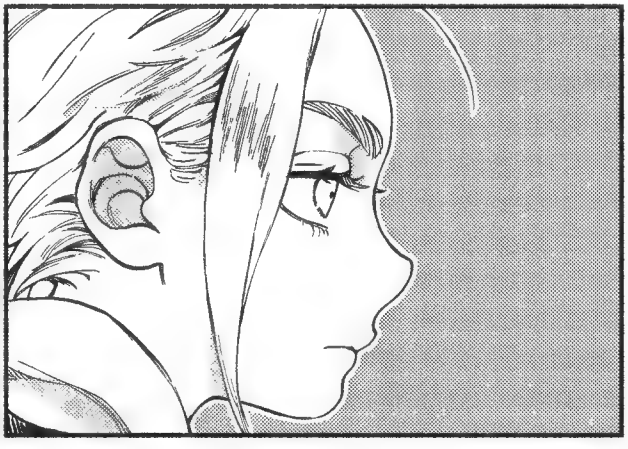

THANKS, ASA.
TUNK

YEAH. THANKS, ASA.
SNRK
.....
TWITCH

Yawn!
G'mornin'...
WATCH OUT, ASA! BE CARE-FUL!
Heh heh.
H-HEY!

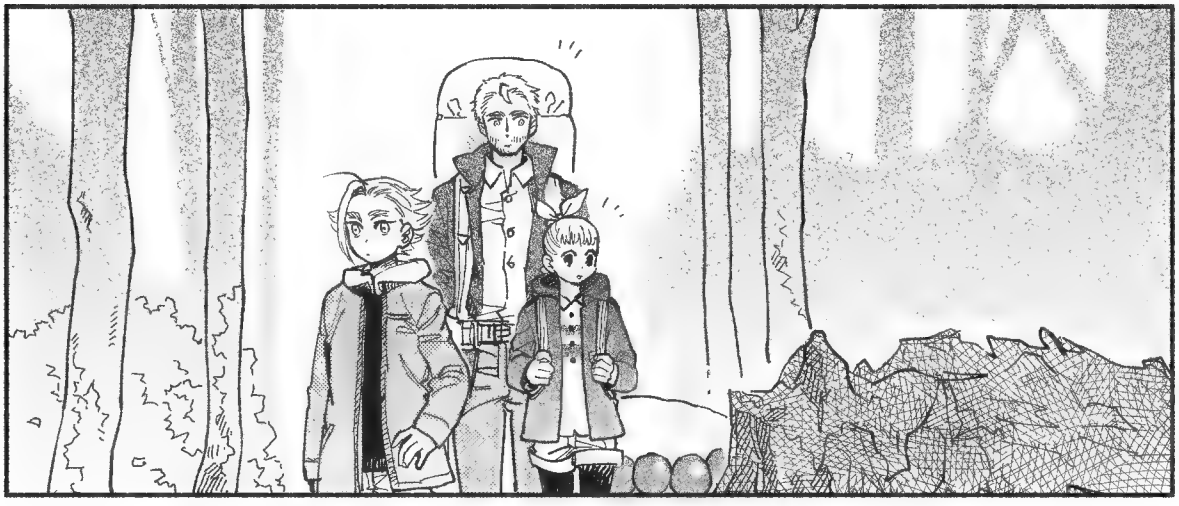

ASA BEING SO HUGE MAKES HER LOOK EVEN TINIER.
HEY, I MEANT TO ASK. HOW OLD ARE YOU, ANYWAY?

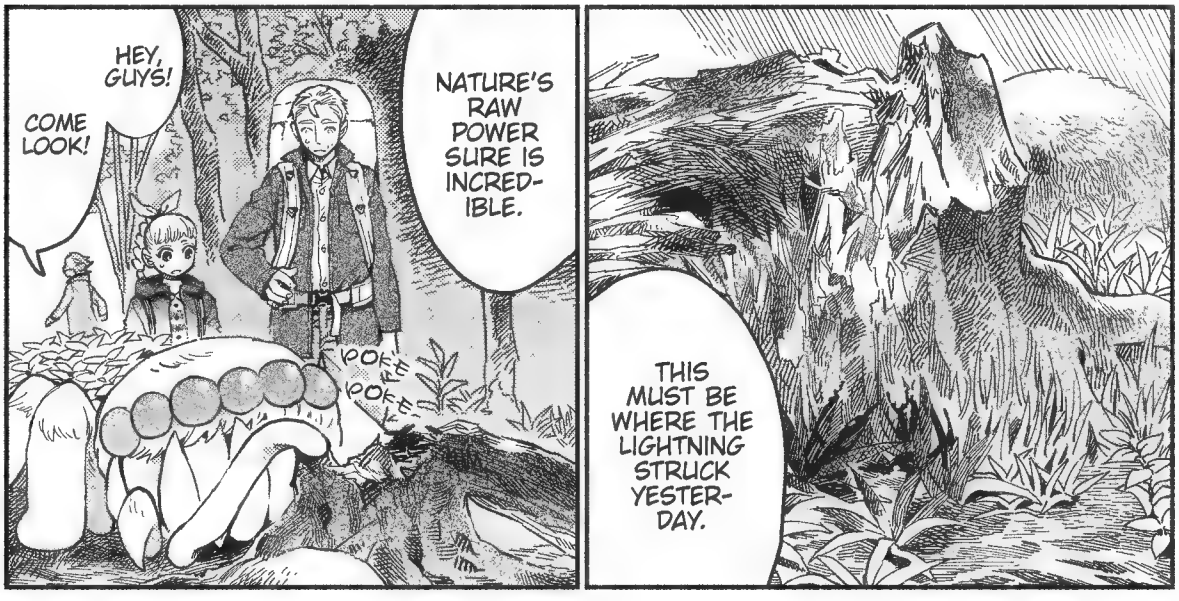
What's wrong?

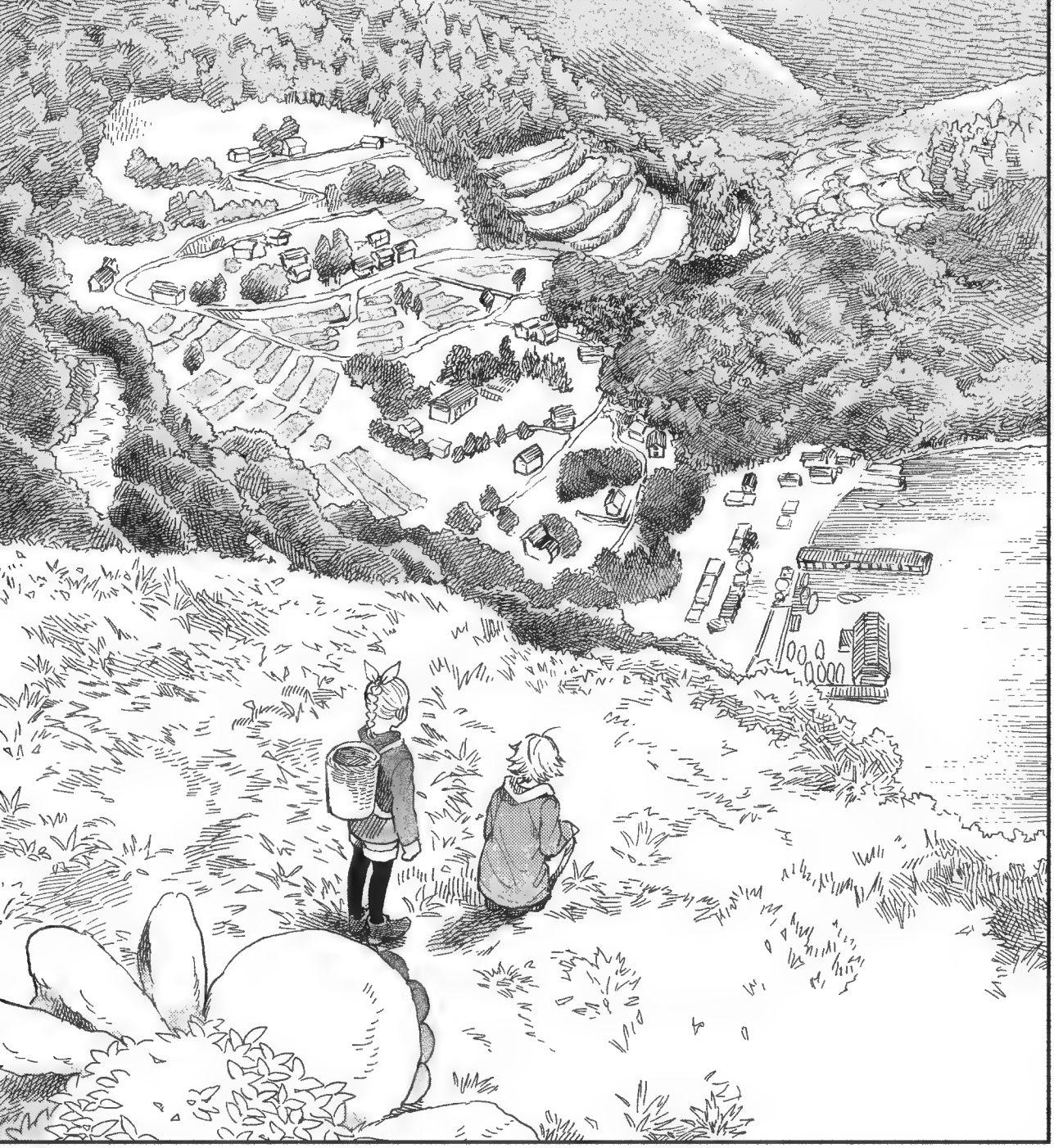


I'M TWELVE.
YOU'RE TWELVE?!
HOW CAN YOU SERIOUSLY BE A YEAR OLDER THAN ME?!
Thank you for the food.
HUH?
WHAT?! YOU'RE YOUNGER THAN ME?!
I WAS SURE YOU WERE OLDER!
Mmm! Yum.
TELL ME ABOUT IT! I THOUGHT YOU WERE YOUNGER.
HMM? IF YOU ASK ME...
THE TWO OF YOU LOOK ABOUT THE SAME AGE.
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE OLD, DAD.
.....

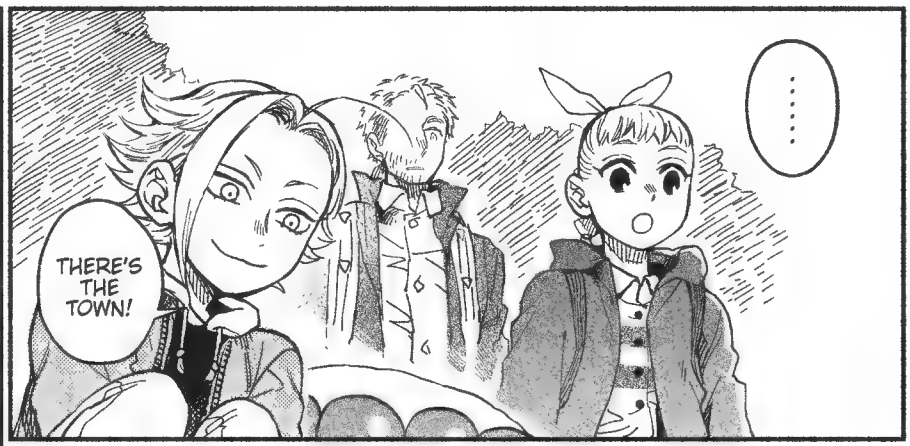
GOT EVERY-THING YOU NEED?
YEP!
KA-CLUNK
LET'S GET MOVING, THEN.
UGH. IT'S STILL DARK OUT HERE.
ASA.
WE'LL BE WALKING A WHOLE LOT TODAY.
MAKE SURE YOU KEEP UP, OKAY?

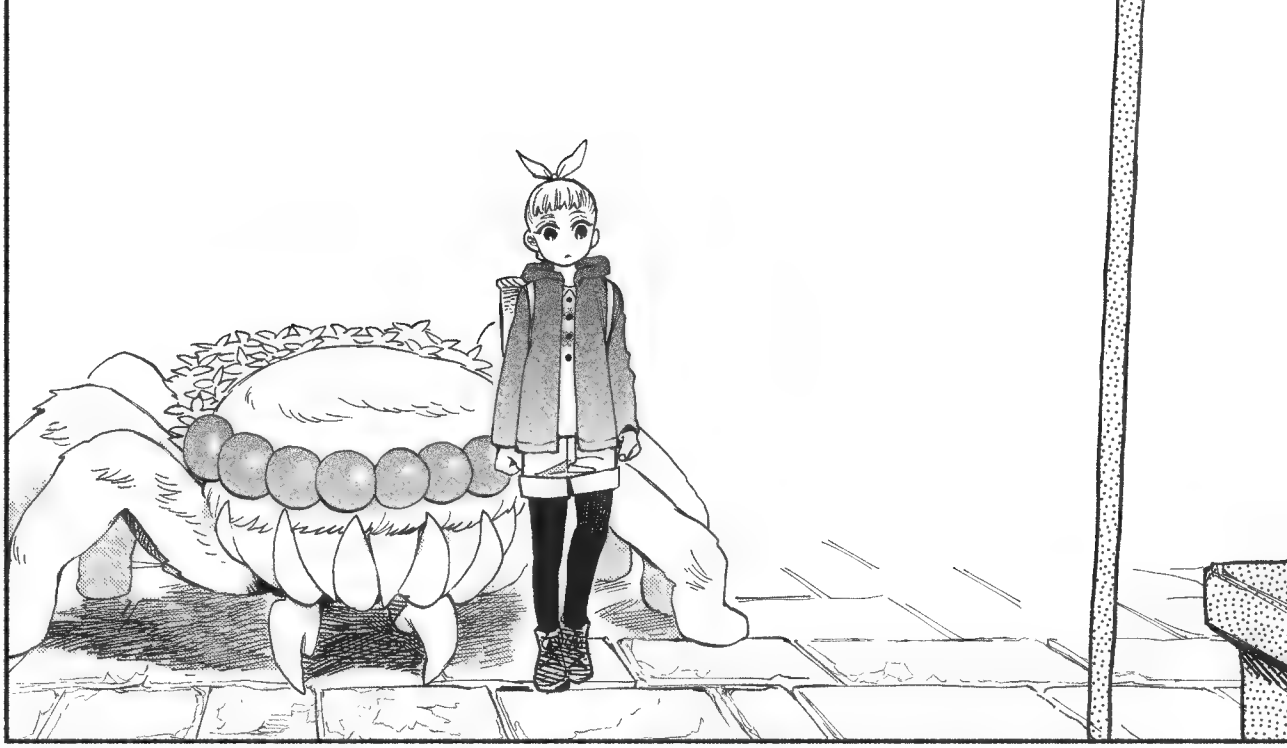


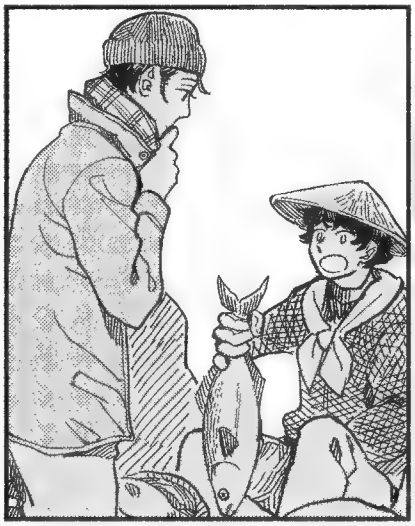

HEY, GUYS!
COME LOOK!
NATURE'S RAW POWER SURE IS INCRED-IBLE.
POKE
POKE
THIS MUST BE WHERE THE LIGHTNING STRUCK YESTER-DAY.



YEAH.
LET'S HURRY ON DOWN THERE!
TMP TMP


THERE'S THE TOWN!
.....

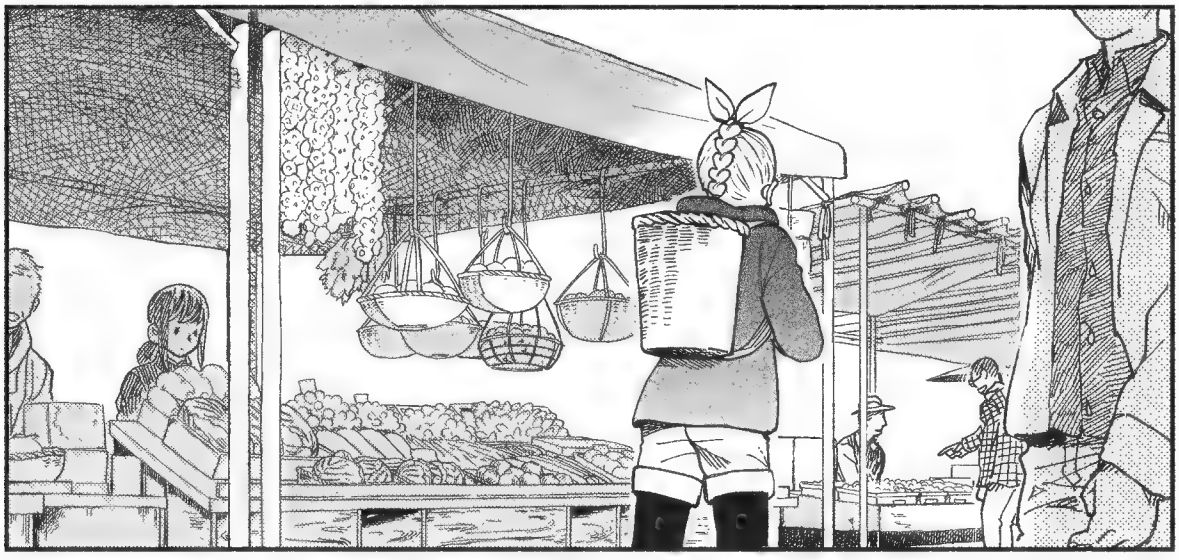


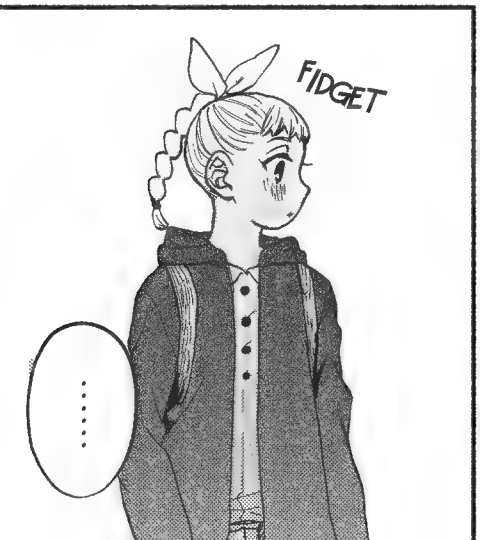


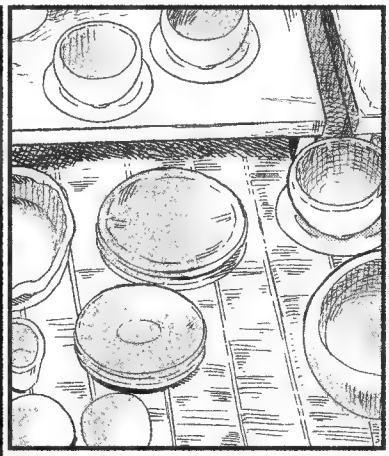
UM...
I, UH... I THINK I NEED A MOMENT TO GET READY...
Ha ha... ha...
HUH?

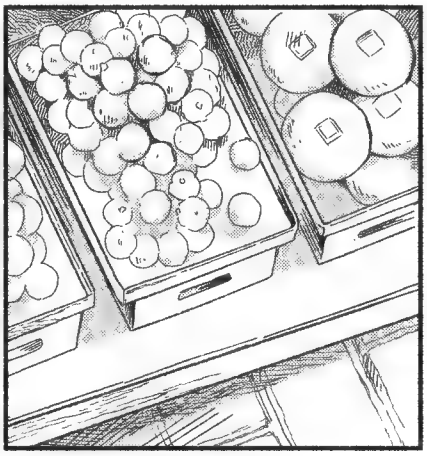
C'MON, NAGI. WHAT'S WRONG?
Wow, so many people here are of Asian descent.
IT'S SO BUSY, ESPECIALLY GIVEN HOW EARLY IT IS.

JUST DO WHAT YOU'RE HERE TO DO! IT'LL ALL WORK OUT!
SHOVE
QUIT YOUR WAFFL-ING!
EEP!
TUG




FIDGET
. . . . . .



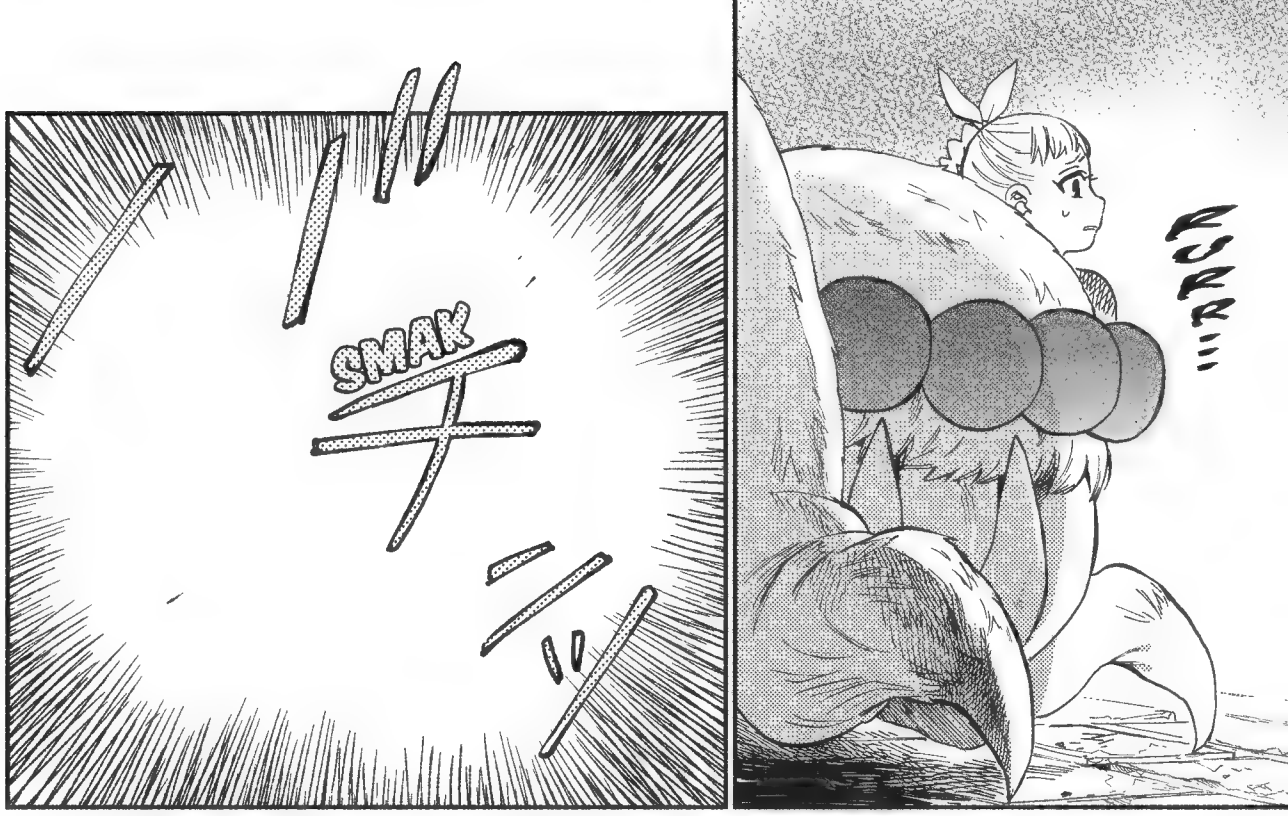


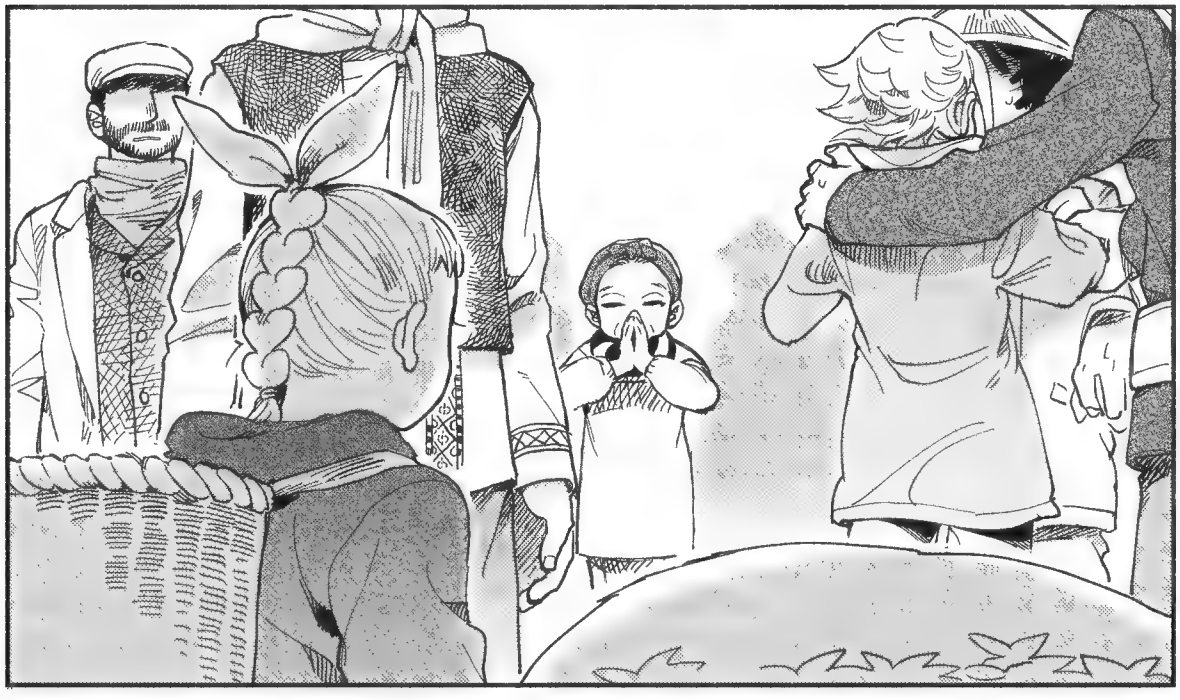
NAGI-CHAN?
AH!
AAH!
NAGI-CHAN, IT IS YOU!
HELLO, GODOT-SAN.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG! I WAS STARTING TO GET WORRIED.
WE HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE LENDING YOU SOME EGGS.
THAT WAS AT LEAST A MONTH AGO.
SKITTER
SKITTER
FELT LIKE COMING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A WHILE?
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE WELL.
YES, SIR.
IT'S IMPRESSIVE THAT YOU'RE MANAGING SO WELL ON YOUR OWN.

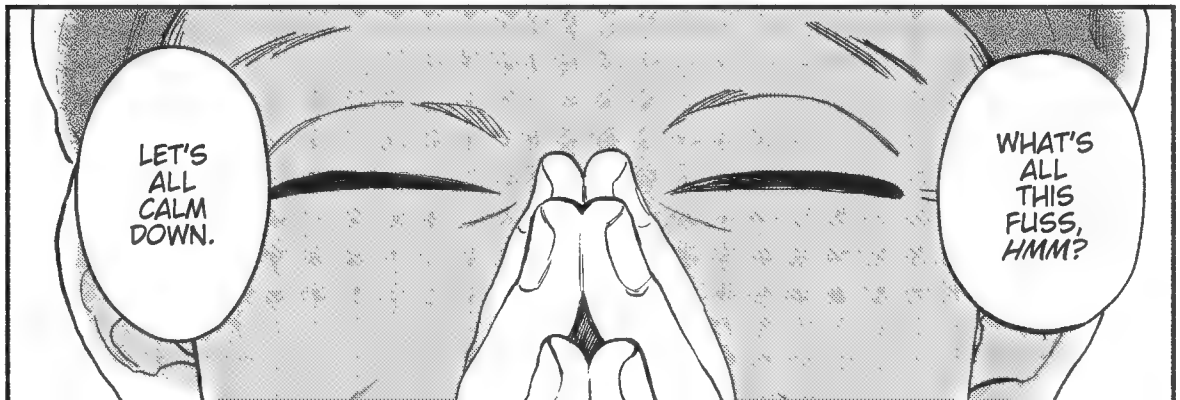
GYAAAAH!!
WHUMP
WH...
WHA...
WHAT IS THAT...
THAT *THING*?!
?

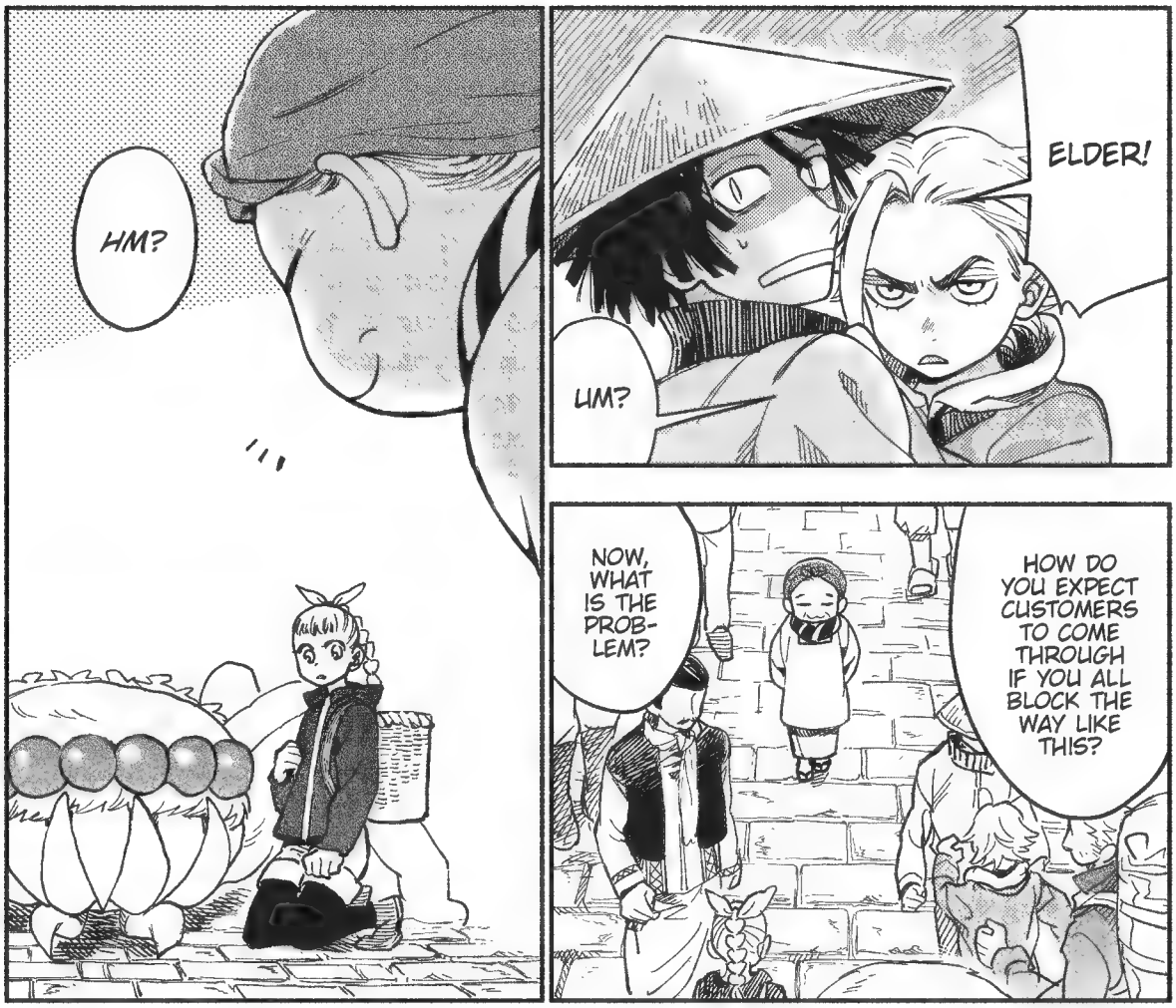
OH, THIS IS...
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
AAAH! EVERY-ONE STAY BACK!!
PSST
WHAT IS THAT?!
IS THAT A SPIDER?!
SOME-BODY TELL THE MAYOR!
MONSTER ...!!
EEEK!
KICK!!
Y-YOU...!

WHAT'RE YOU THROWIN' STUFF FOR, YOU COWARD?!
CUT THAT OUT!
ﾌﾞﾝｯ
YIKES!
BELLE! STOP THAT!
OH NO! NOW WHAT...?
GRRR!!


SMAK
FURR!!



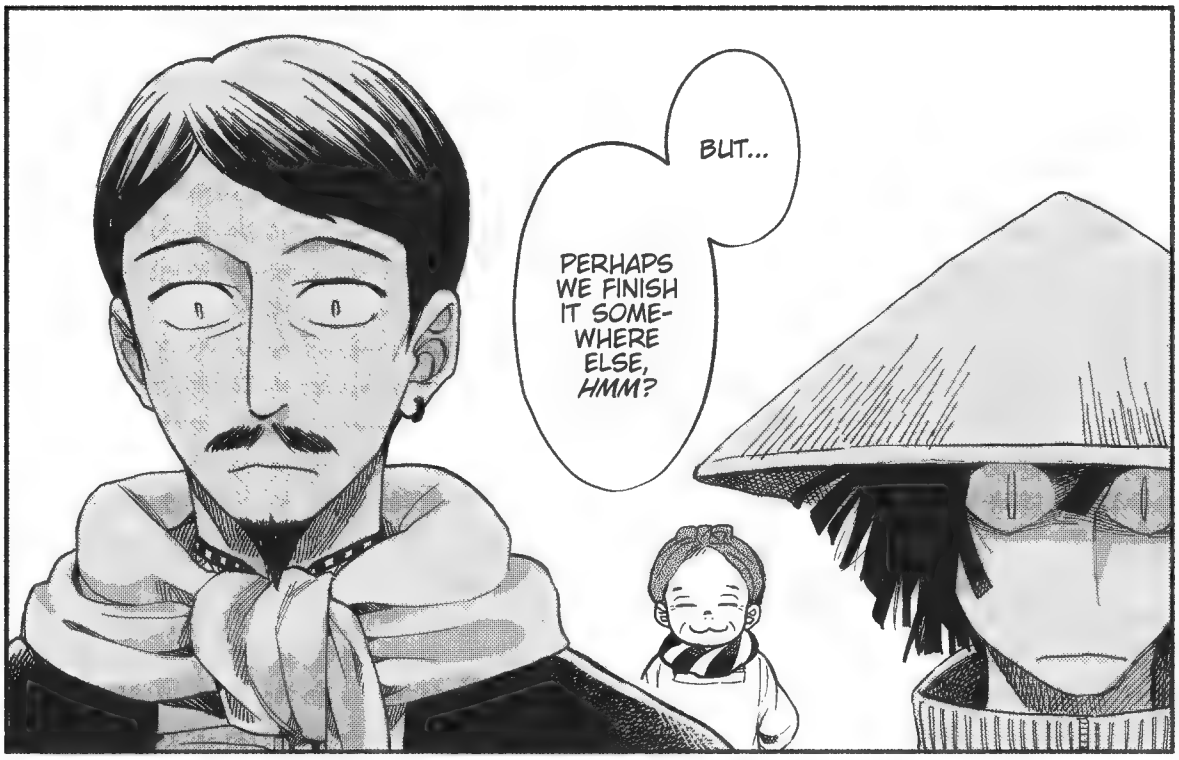

LET'S ALL CALM DOWN.
WHAT'S ALL THIS FUSS, HMM?


HM?
ELDER!
UM?
NOW, WHAT IS THE PROB-LEM?
HOW DO YOU EXPECT CUSTOMERS TO COME THROUGH IF YOU ALL BLOCK THE WAY LIKE THIS?

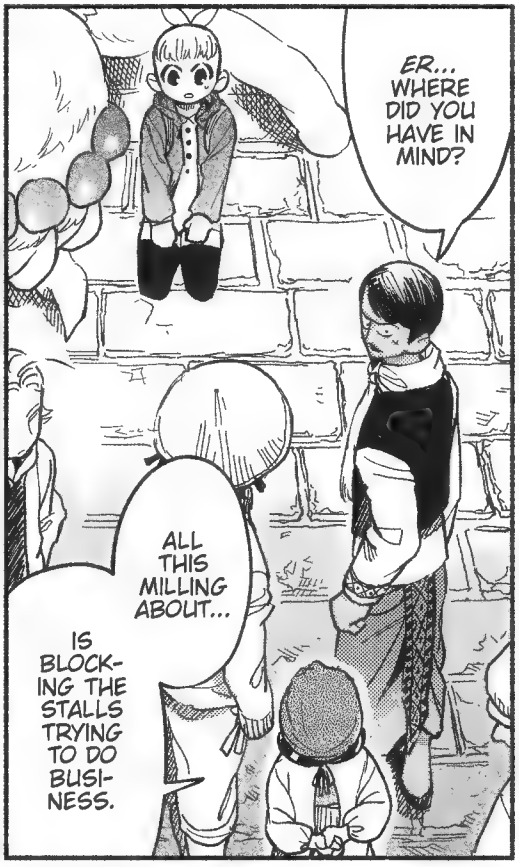
UM!
THIS...
IS ASA.
WELL, IF IT ISN'T YOUNG NAGI. AND WHO MIGHT THIS BE?

I KNOW ASA'S LARGE AND HAS A BIG TOOTHY MOUTH, BUT...
THEY'RE STILL JUST A BABY! THEY'RE NOT SCARY OR MEAN AT ALL!
THAT'S NOT TRUE!
NOT FIVE MINUTES AGO...
I SAW IT TRY TO STEAL FROM MY FRUIT STAND!
IT'S A FILTHY, THIEVING BEAST!
NO! ASA WAS JUST CURI-OUS...!
NAGI-CHAN, NO ONE WILL BLAME YOU FOR THIS, BUT...
THIS CREATURE NEEDS TO BE CHASED AWAY OR LOCKED UP.
WE'LL HAVE TO HOLD A MEET-ING TO DECIDE.
EVEN IF IT'S NOT HARMFUL NOW, IT COULD START ATTACKING PEOPLE WHEN IT MATURES.
GRR!
ASA WOULD NEVER DO THAT!

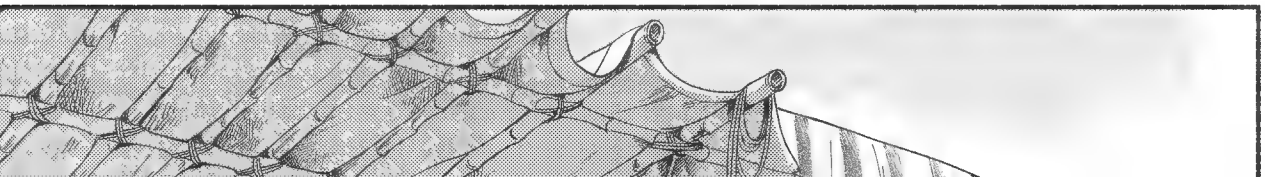
WE'D ALL LOVE TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THIS CREATURE NOT BEING A THREAT, BUT--
NAGI-CHAN, I KNOW YOU'RE VERY RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR AGE, BUT YOU'RE STILL A CHILD.
A POSITIVE OUTLOOK IS VALUABLE... UP TO A POINT.
YOU CAN'T LET IT DELUDE YOU.
I DO HATE TO INTERRUPT THIS CONVER-SATION.


BUT...
PERHAPS WE FINISH IT SOME-WHERE ELSE, HMM?

COME WITH ME, EVERY-ONE.
TURN


ER... WHERE DID YOU HAVE IN MIND?
ALL THIS MILLING ABOUT...
IS BLOCK-ING THE STALLS TRYING TO DO BUSI-NESS.

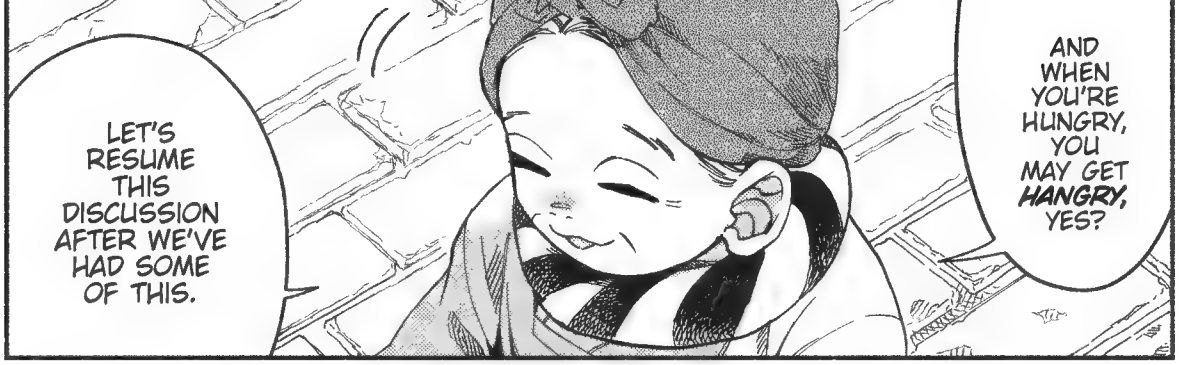
.....?

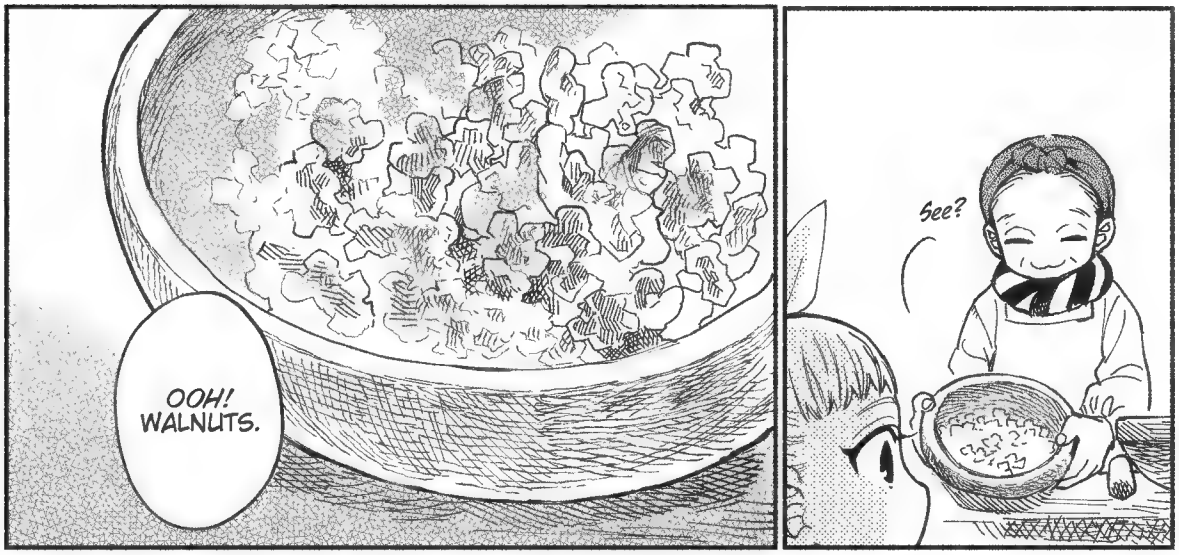


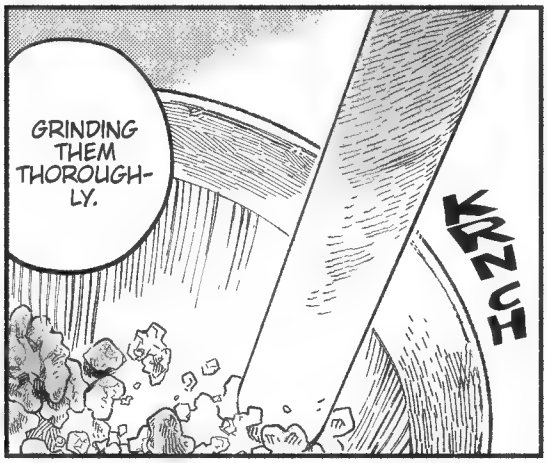
TUMP
NOW, THEN.
MILK
LET'S GET STARTED.

I THOUGHT EVERYONE MIGHT BE HUNGRY, IS ALL.

WHO KNOWS?
WHAT ARE WE START-ING?


LET'S RESUME THIS DISCUSSION AFTER WE'VE HAD SOME OF THIS.
AND WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY, YOU MAY GET *HANGRY*, YES?


OOH! WALNUTS.
See?

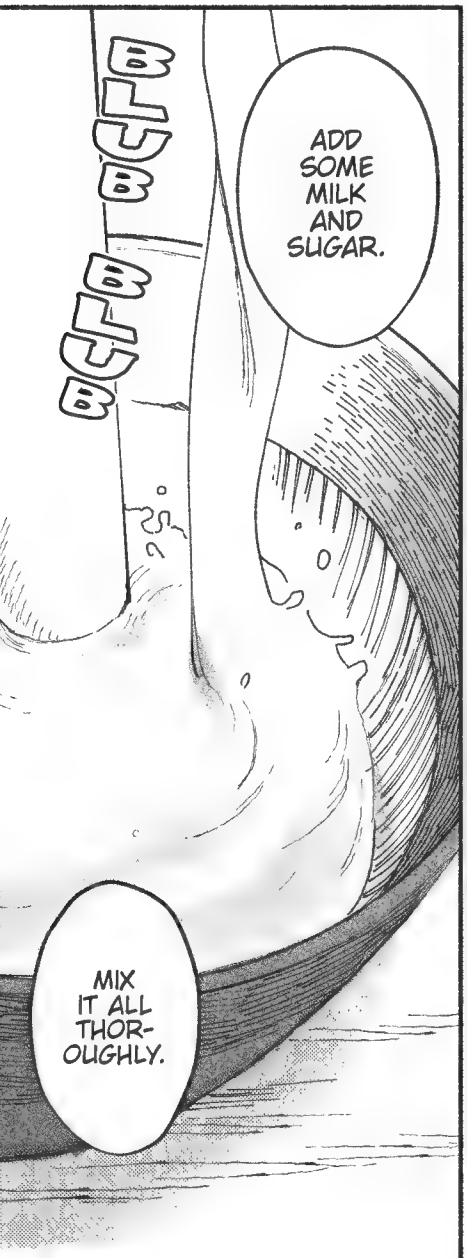

GRINDING THEM THOROUGH-LY.
KRNCH

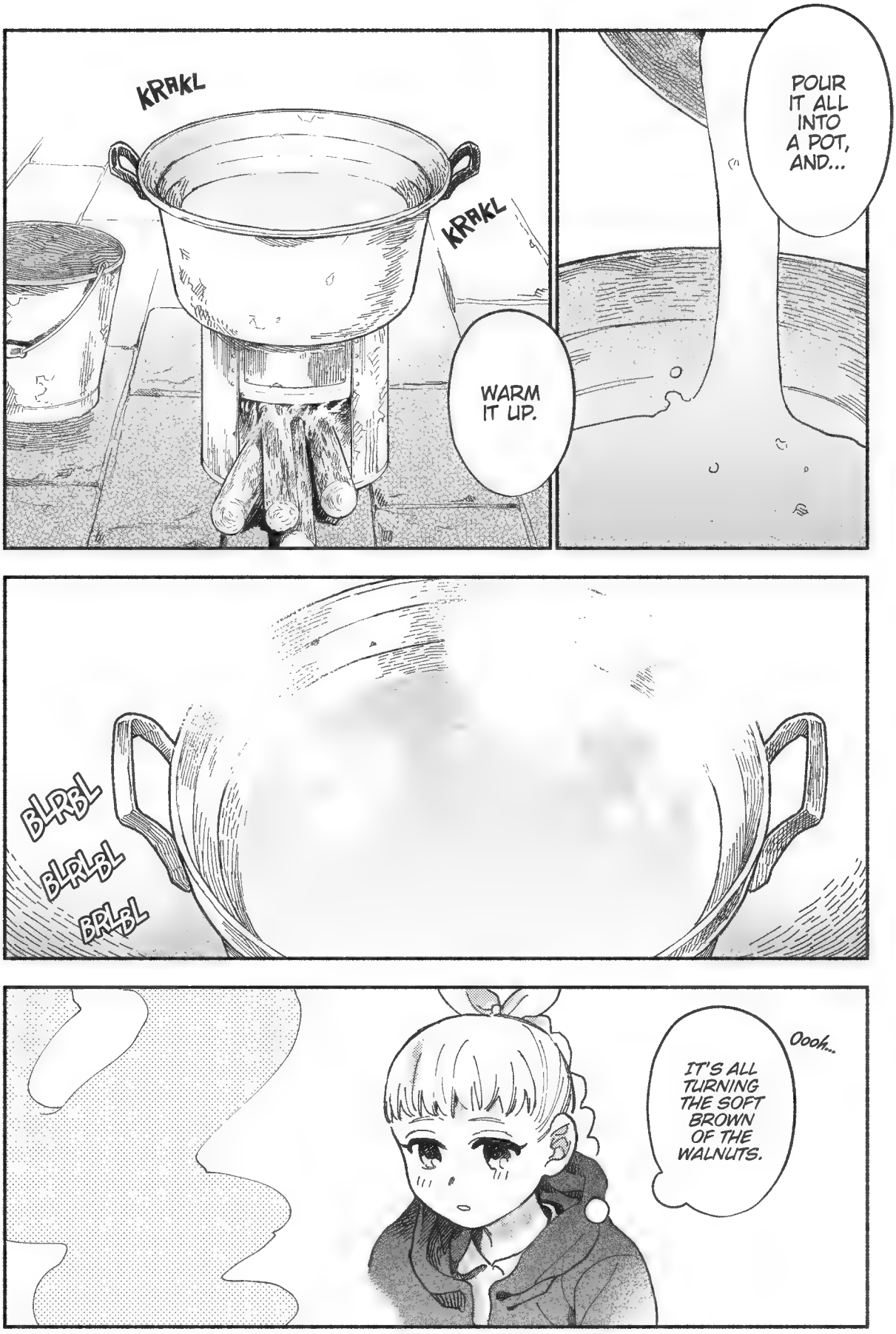
KRNCH
KRIK
SKRCH
IT TAKES A FAIR BIT OF ELBOW GREASE.

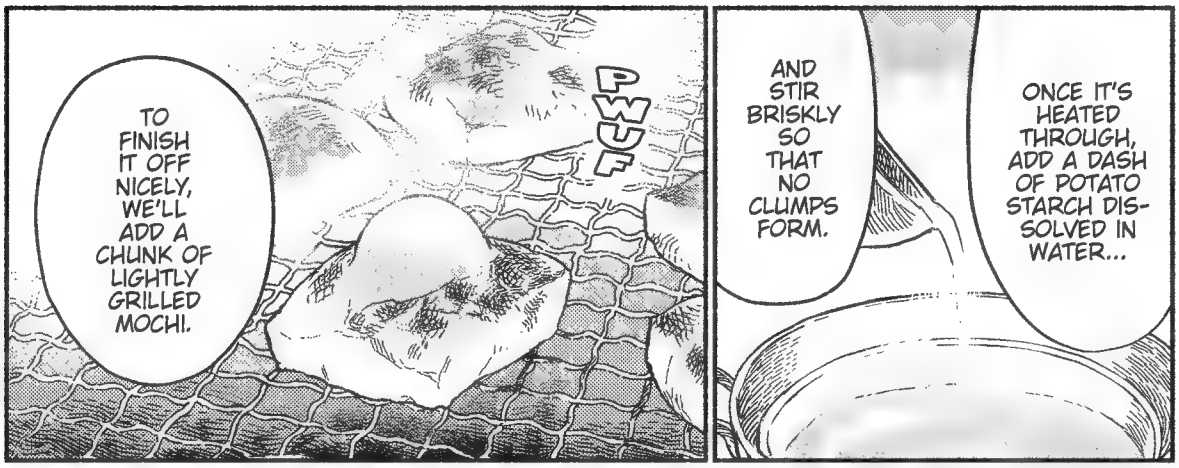
WE'LL START BY PUTTING THREE BIG HANDFULS OF SHELLED WALNUTS INTO A MORTAR, AND...
SWF
SWF
YES, INDEED.
KLATTA
KLATTA

SKRUCH
SKRUCH
SKRUCH
THERE, THAT SEEMS GOOD.

GRIND THEM DOWN UNTIL THERE ARE NO VISIBLE LUMPS.


ADD SOME MILK AND SUGAR.
MIX IT ALL THOR-OUGHLY.

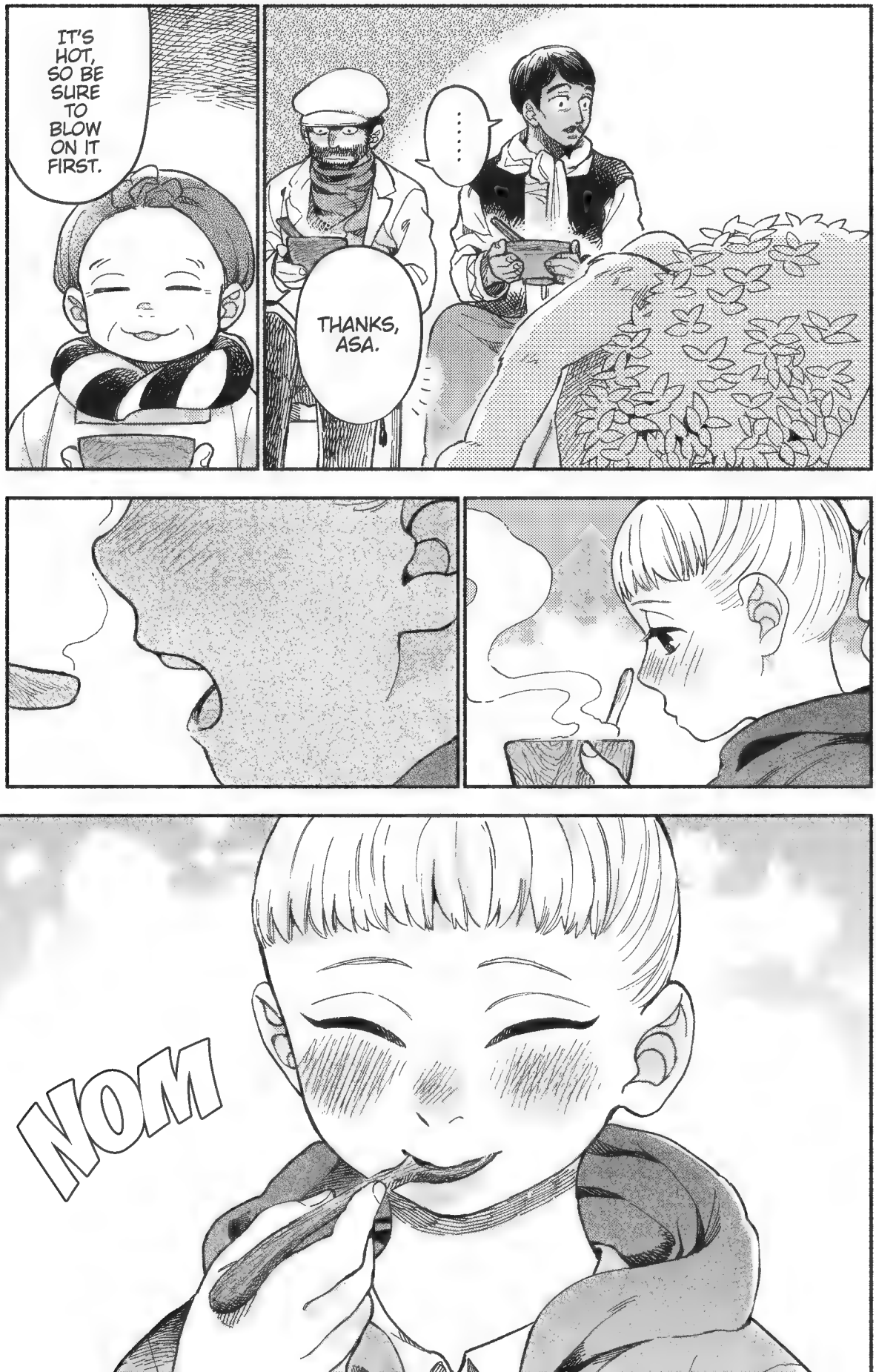

KRAKL
KRAKL
WARM IT UP.
POUR IT ALL INTO A POT, AND...
BLRBL
BLRLBL
BRLBL
Oooh...
IT'S ALL TURNING THE SOFT BROWN OF THE WALNUTS.


TO FINISH IT OFF NICELY, WE'LL ADD A CHUNK OF LIGHTLY GRILLED MOCHI.
PWUF
AND STIR BRISKLY SO THAT NO CLUMPS FORM.
ONCE IT'S HEATED THROUGH, ADD A DASH OF POTATO STARCH DISSOLVED IN WATER...

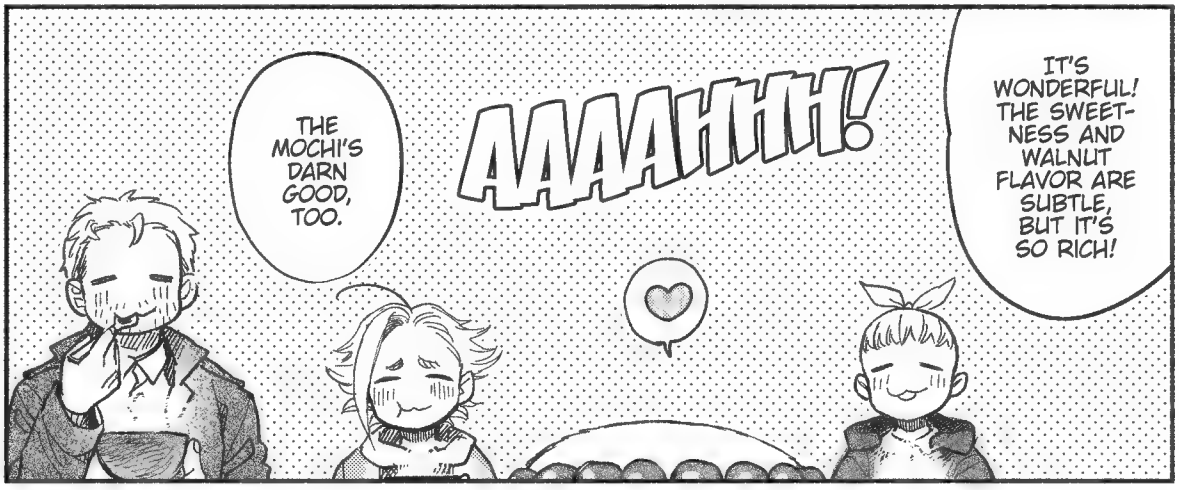
WALNUT SOUP

(Serves 5~6)
3 handfuls shelled walnuts
(approx. 85 grams)
800 ml milk
1/3 cup sugar
1 1/2 tablespoons potato starch
5~6 pieces mochi

OH?
YOU'RE GOING TO HELP SERVE, ARE YOU?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
SWF
TWO
TWO
HUH?
SHWF

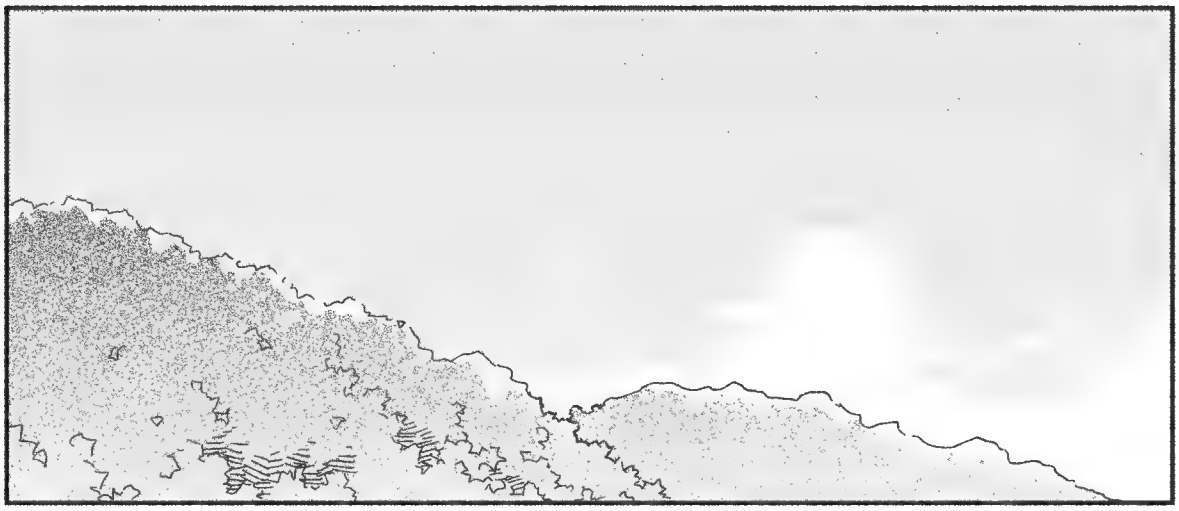

IT'S HOT, SO BE SURE TO BLOW ON IT FIRST.
.....
THANKS, ASA.
NOM

MMMM!!

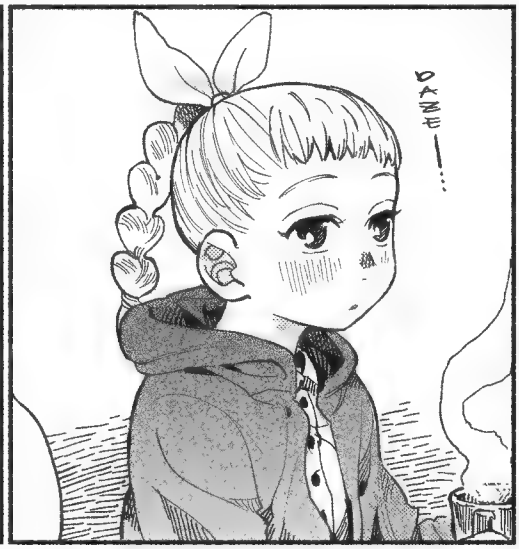

AAAAHHH!
THE MOCHI'S DARN GOOD, TOO.
IT'S WONDERFUL! THE SWEETNESS AND WALNUT FLAVOR ARE SUBTLE, BUT IT'S SO RICH!

IT'S TASTY AND STICKS TO THE RIBS.
WHAT'S MORE, IT'S VERY NUTRITIOUS.
THERE'S NO END TO THE GOODNESS OF WALNUTS.
Have some tea.
AAH~!

IT'S CERTAINLY WARMING...
YEAH.



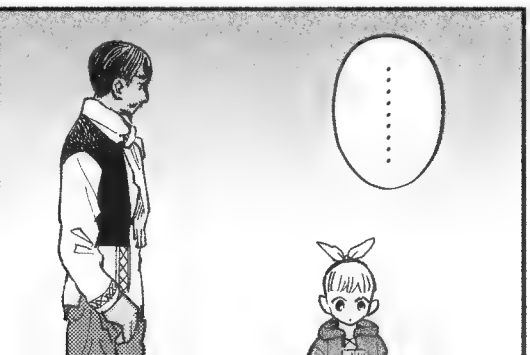
NAGI-CHAN.


DANE——…

HORE——…
NNN…

IT REALLY WAS.

GODOT-SAN.
THAT WALNUT SOUP WAS GOOD…
WASN'T IT?


……

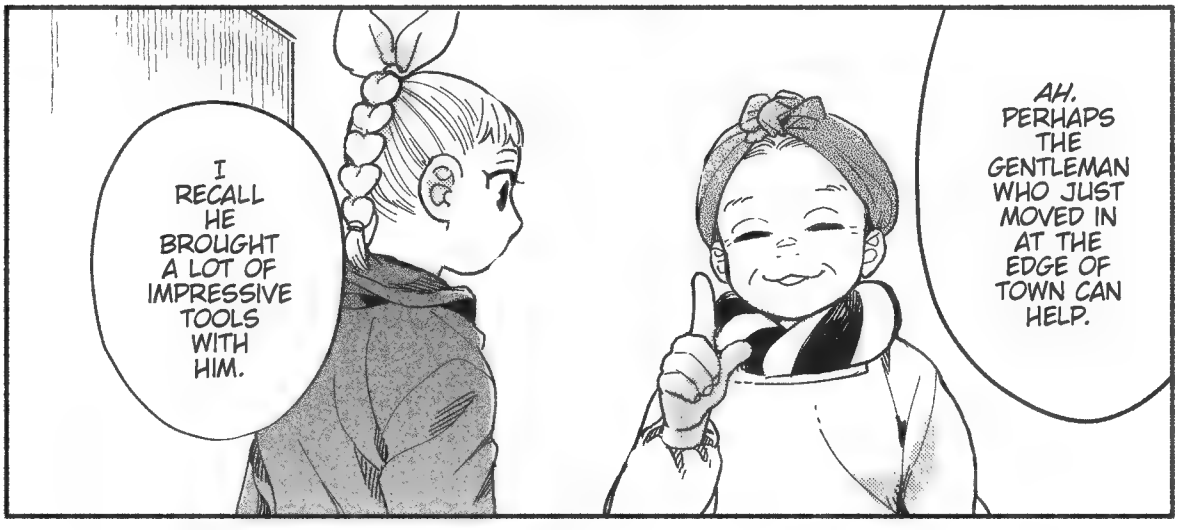
SO, ER... ANYWAY...
ABOUT THE EARLIER SUBJECT...
I THINK WE'LL NEED TO DISCUSS IT MORE.
WHAT ?!
HEY! GODOT ...!
NO, WE DO.
I THINK WE TOO WERE ONLY...
LOOKING AT THIS SITUATION, AND AT NAGI-CHAN'S POSITION, FROM ONE SIDE.
I THINK WITH SOME DISCUS-SION...
WE WILL BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH...
SOME SPECIFIC **RESTRICTIONS** UNDER WHICH EVERYONE MIGHT HAVE AN EASIER TIME ACCEPTING ASA.

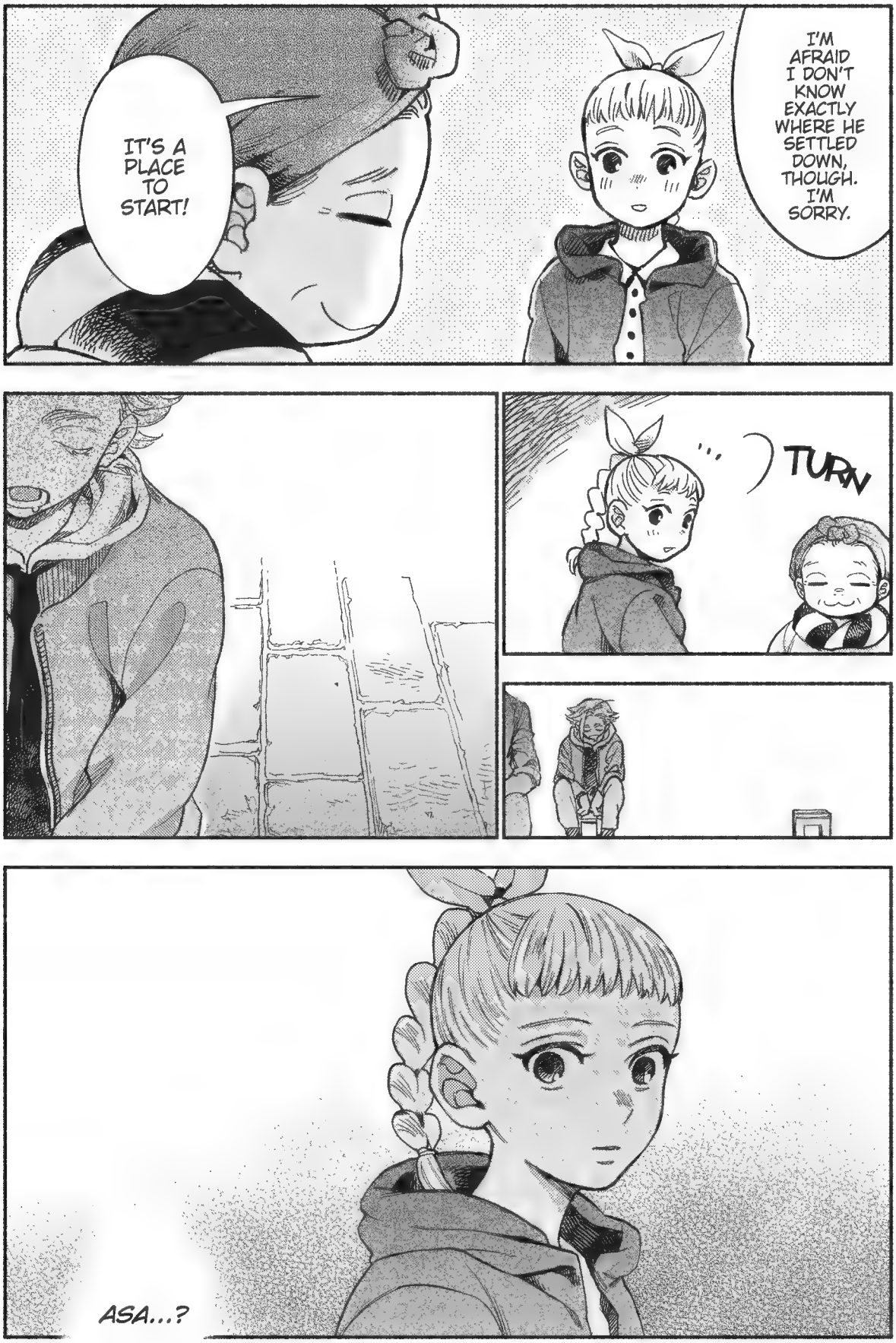
THANK YOU, GODOT-SAN.
NO, DON'T THANK ME.
OKAY!
!
I'D SAY YOUR TALKS ARE GOING NICELY.
WELL, THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD START.
YOU CERTAINLY BROUGHT A LIVELY CARAVAN DOWN THE MOUNTAIN WITH YOU, MY DEAR.
NOW, THEN...

OH, DEAR.
WELL...
IT'S A LONG STORY, BUT MY ROOF'S GOT A BIG HOLE IN IT NOW.
I'M HOPING I CAN FIND A CARPENTER OR SOMEONE WHO CAN FIX IT.

OH! ACTUALLY, THEY'RE GOING TO HELP ME LOOK FOR SOMEONE.
WHO MIGHT THAT BE?

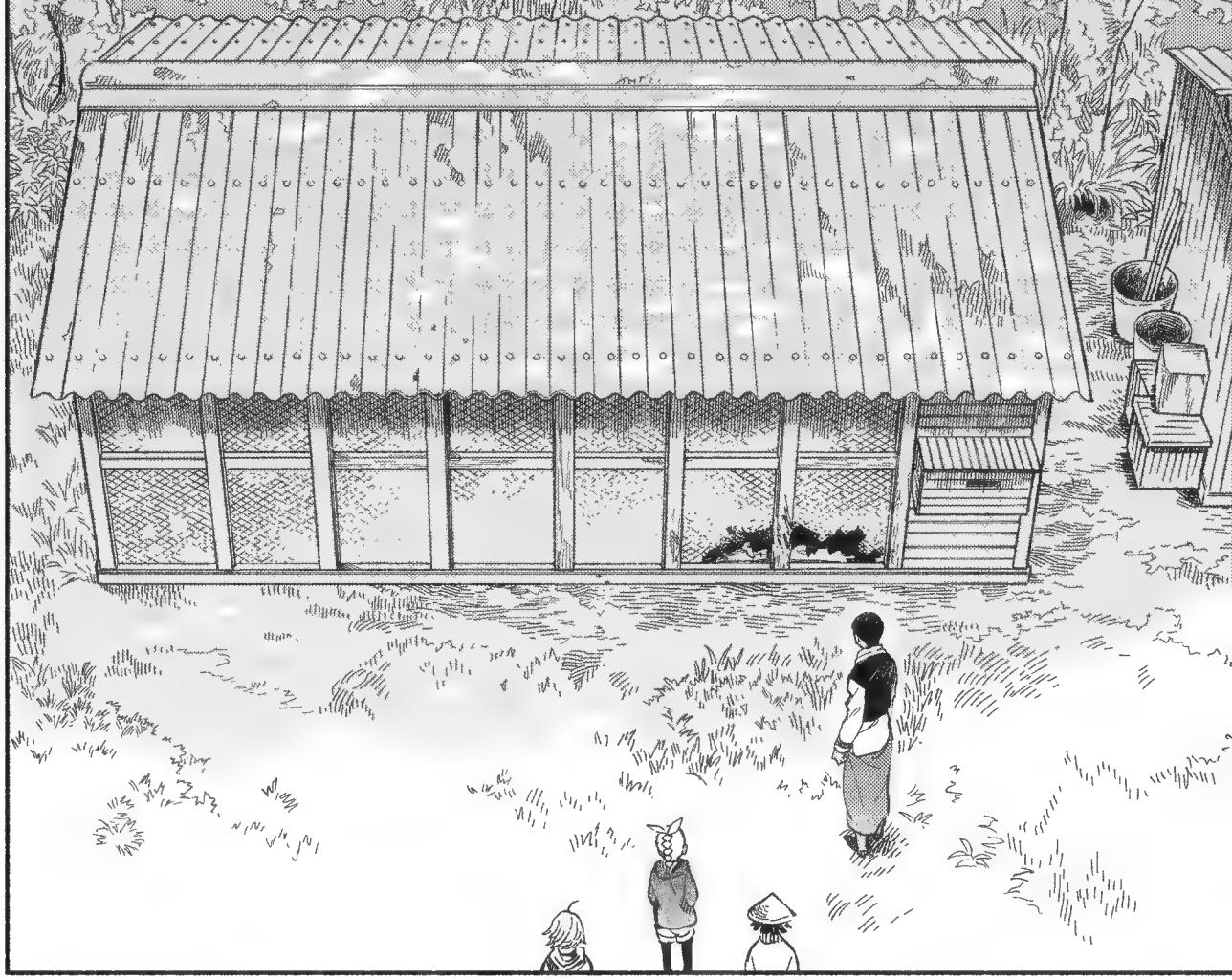
Hmm...
DO WE STILL HAVE A PRACTICING CARPENTER AROUND HERE?
A CARPEN-TER...?
All the people coming to mind are retired.


I RECALL HE BROUGHT A LOT OF IMPRESSIVE TOOLS WITH HIM.
AH. PERHAPS THE GENTLEMAN WHO JUST MOVED IN AT THE EDGE OF TOWN CAN HELP.


IT'S A PLACE TO START!
I'M AFRAID I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHERE HE SETTLED DOWN, THOUGH. I'M SORRY.
TURN
ASA...?

EVERYONE, WE HAVE A PROBLEM!!
THE TOWN CHICKEN COOP IS DAMAGED!
ALL OUR CHICKENS ARE GONE...!

Chapter 7: Missing Asa & a Creamy Stew



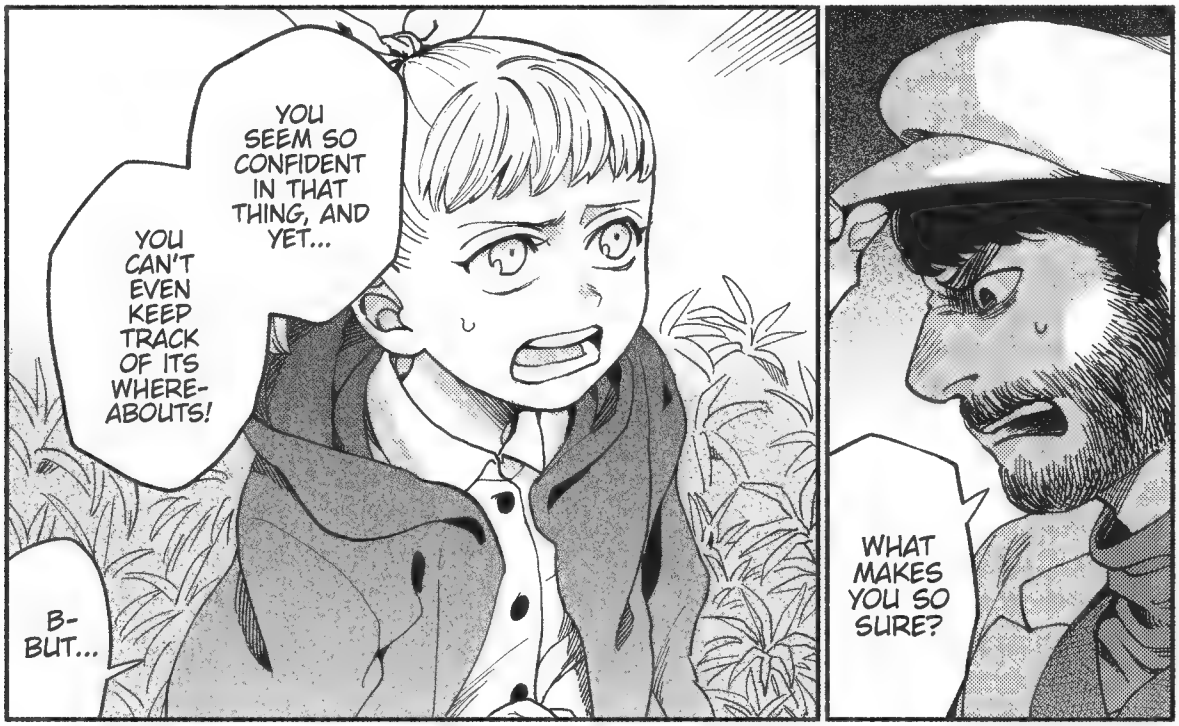
TELL EVERYONE TO STAY SAFELY INDOORS.
WHATEVER DID THIS COULD STILL BE LURKING NEARBY.
GOT IT.

THOSE LOOK LIKE CLAW MARKS FROM A BEAST.

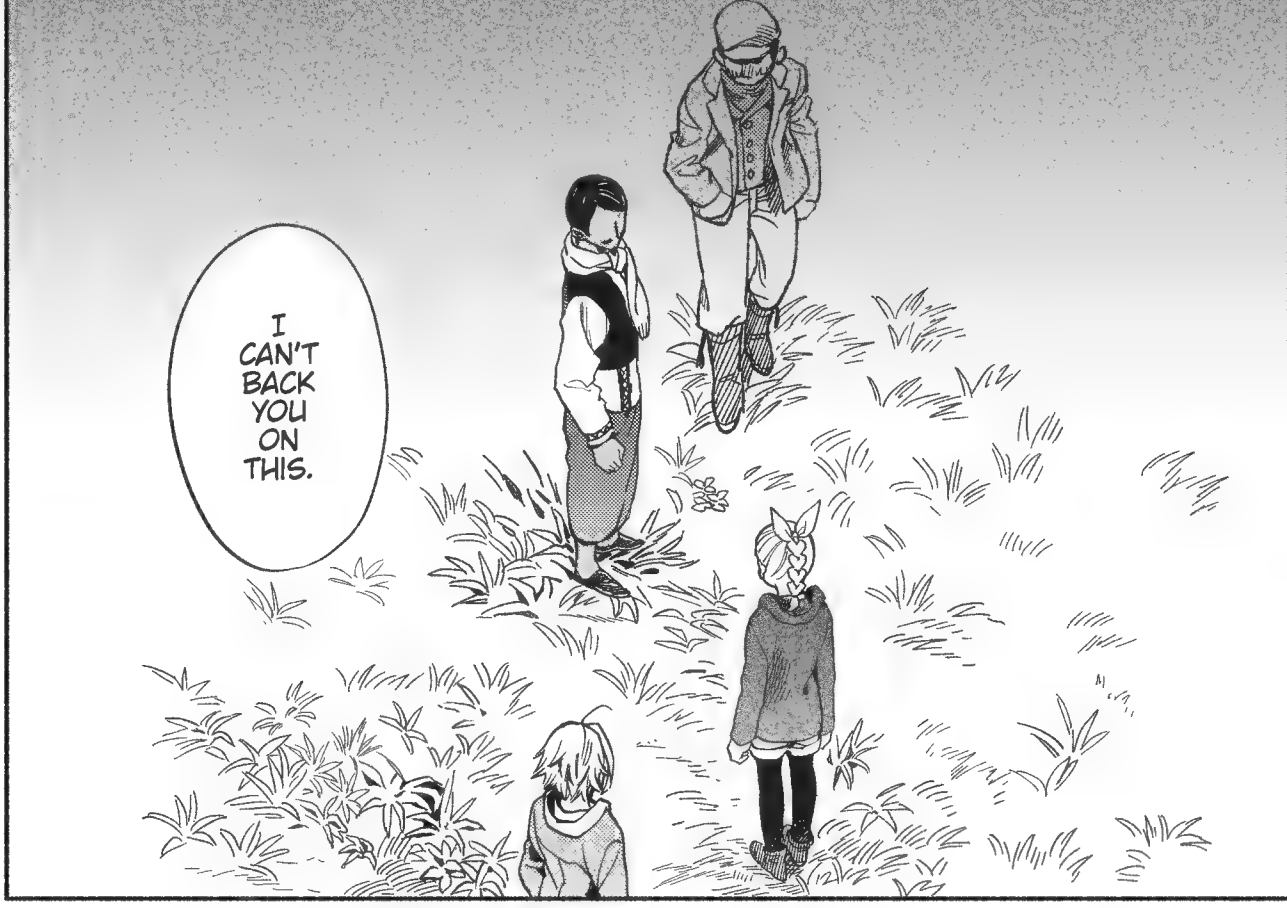
BUT...
HOLD ON!
YOU CAN TAKE SHELTER AT MY HOUSE.
THAT GOES FOR YOU TOO, NAGI-CHAN.
WHERE'S THAT MONSTER OF YOURS, HUH?
OLEG ...?

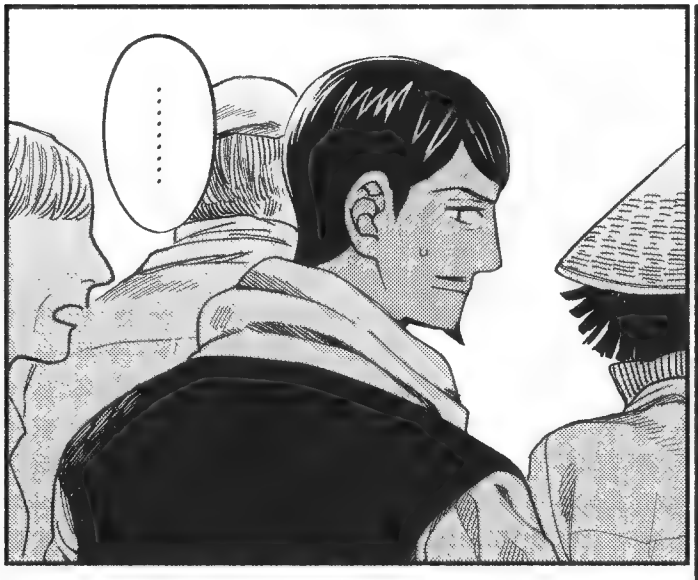
NAGI-CHAN, WHERE DID IT GO?
.....
THAT'S TRUE.
I HAVEN'T SEEN THAT HUGE SPIDER AROUND SINCE...
THANG CAME AND TOLD US WHAT HAPPEN-ED.
.....
I...I DON'T KNOW...
?!
THEN...
I KNEW IT!
THAT MONSTER IS WHAT WRECKED THE COOP!!

THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT!!
NO!


B-BUT...
YOU CAN'T EVEN KEEP TRACK OF ITS WHERE-ABOUTS!
YOU SEEM SO CONFIDENT IN THAT THING, AND YET...
WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE?

I'M SORRY, NAGI-CHAN.
THAT'S ALL--!
ASA IS... IS JUST TAKING A WALK!
GODOT-SAN...!


I CAN'T BACK YOU ON THIS.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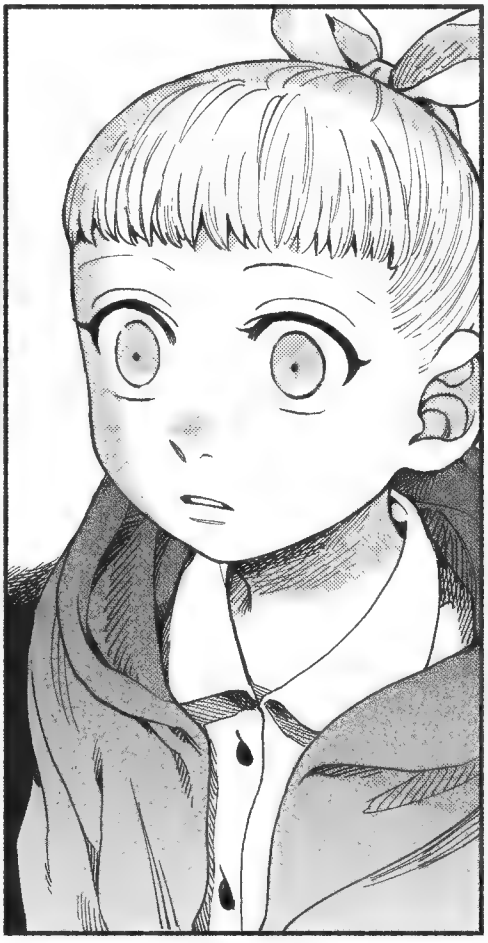
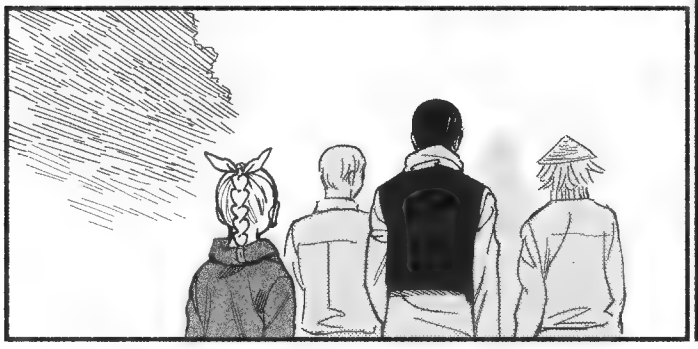




HE SURE CHANGED HIS TUNE FAST.
Tch!
WHAT'LL WE DO NOW, NAGI?
NAGI...?
THIS IS MY FAULT, ISN'T IT?
I RELIED TOO MUCH ON EVERY-ONE'S GOOD-WILL.
I DIDN'T REALLY LOOK AT ASA FOR WHAT THEY ARE.
NOW WHAT DO I DO...?

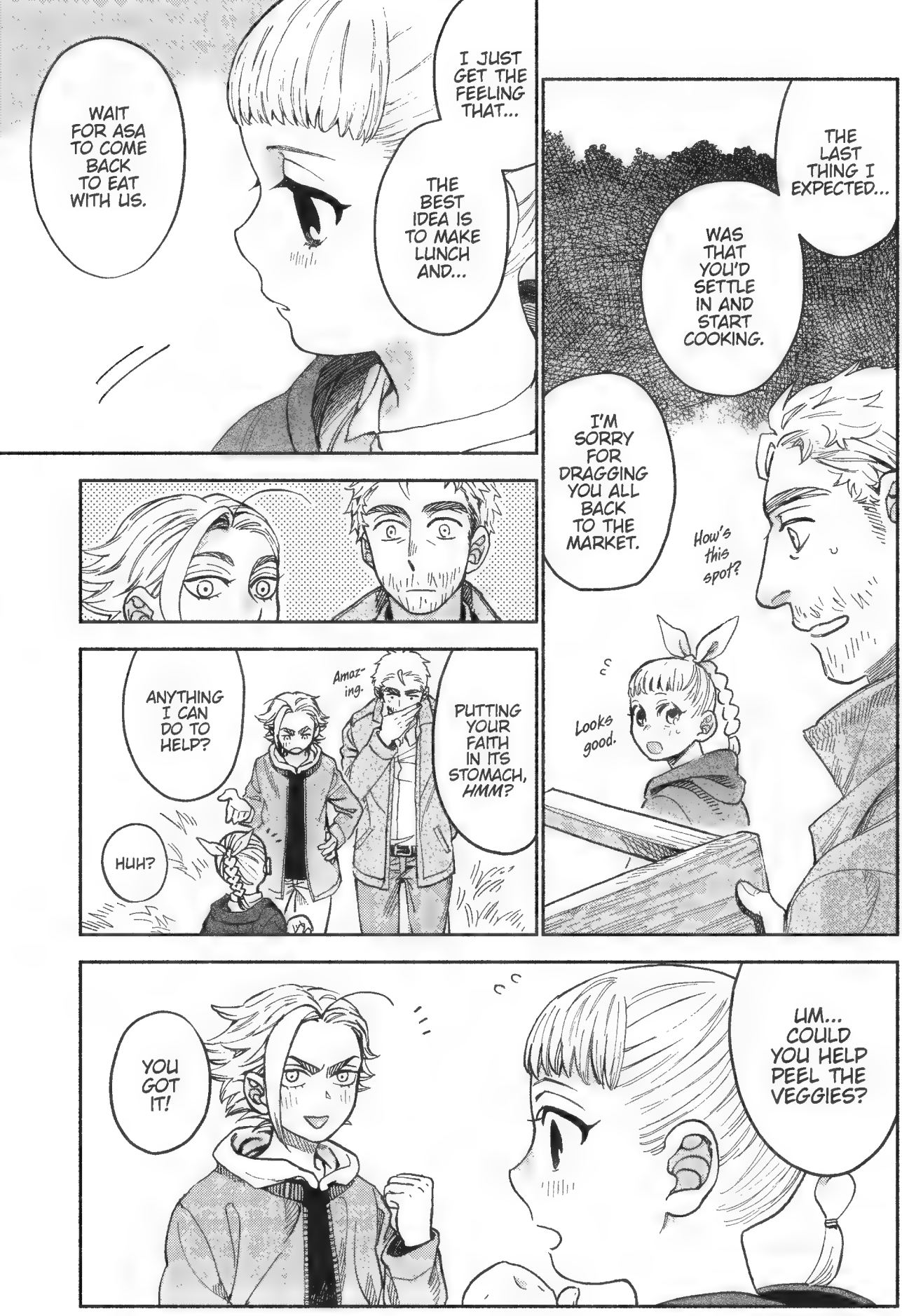
YANK
DUMMY!
YOW!
TUG
TUG
TUG
TUG
TUG
TUG
TUG
TUG
OW, OW, OW, OW, OW!
I GET THAT YOU WANNA SIT AROUND CRYING...
BUT AREN'T YOU FORGET-TING SOME-THING?!
WHILE YOU'RE HERE WHINING...
ASA'S OUT THERE ALL ALONE SOME-PLACE!
.....!

EVERY-ONE IN THIS TOWN HAS THINGS...
THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM, THAT THEY WANT TO PROTECT.
BELLE HAS A POINT.
.....
SWF
THAT'S TRUE OF YOU TOO, RIGHT, NAGI-CHAN?
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO PROTECT RIGHT NOW?

...!
RUB
I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO CRY.
WE...WE HAVE TO FIND ASA, DON'T WE...?

WELL, IF IT LEFT TOWN, WE'LL HAVE TO GO LOOKING FOR IT IN THE MOUNTAINS.
I wonder where it got to?
I THINK THAT...
IF WE JUST START POKING AROUND, ASA'LL THINK IT'S A GAME OR SOME-THING.
ANY IDEA WHERE IT MIGHT'VE GONE?
SHAKE
SHAKE
HMPH! YOUR CRITTER'S A GIANT EIGHT-LEGGED SCAREDY-CAT.
.....
?
OH!

THERE! THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.

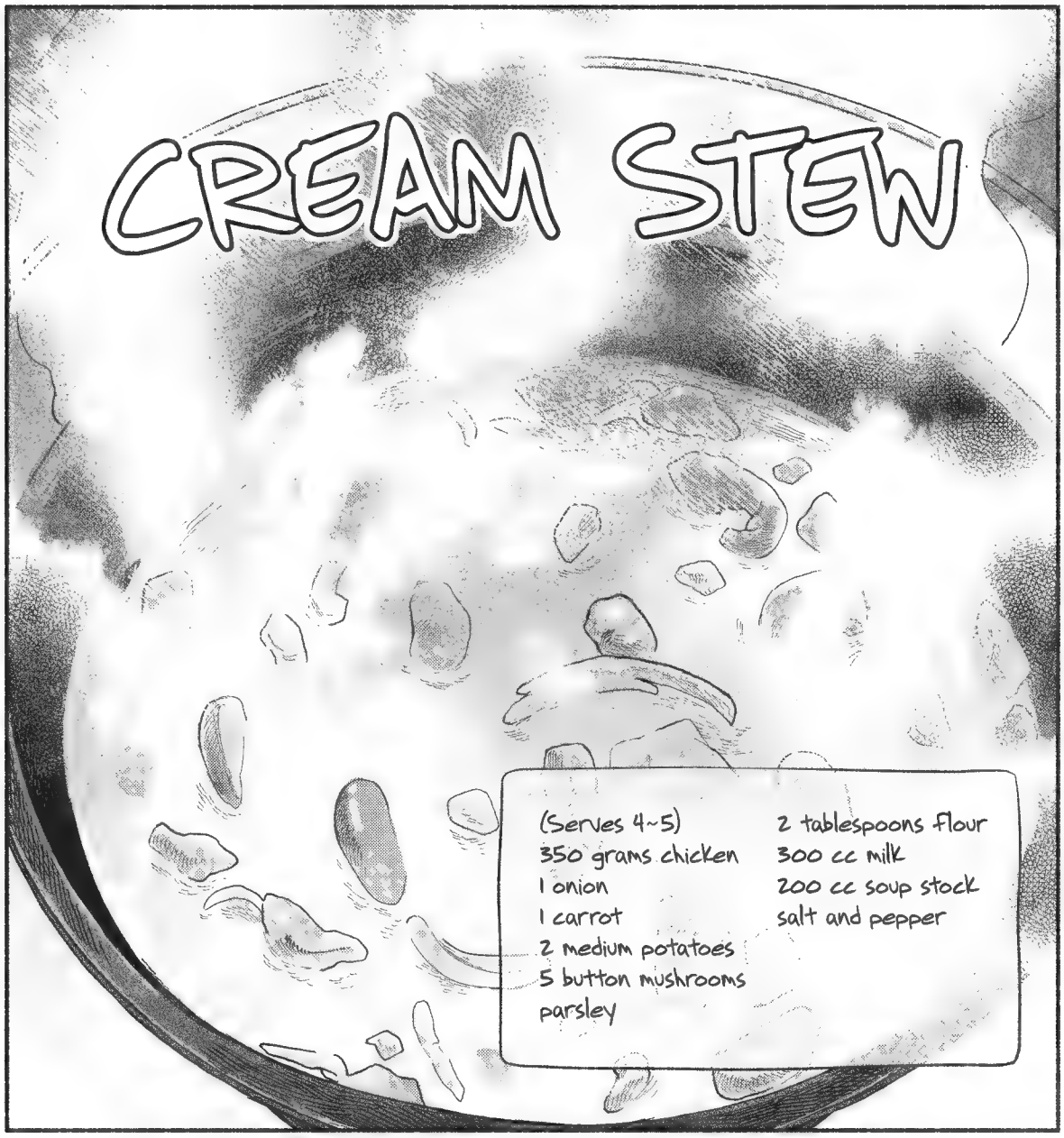

I JUST GET THE FEELING THAT...
THE BEST IDEA IS TO MAKE LUNCH AND...
WAIT FOR ASA TO COME BACK TO EAT WITH US.
THE LAST THING I EXPECTED...
WAS THAT YOU'D SETTLE IN AND START COOKING.
I'M SORRY FOR DRAGGING YOU ALL BACK TO THE MARKET.
How's this spot?
Looks good.
PUTTING YOUR FAITH IN ITS STOMACH, HMM?
Amaz-ing.
ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP?
HUH?
UM... COULD YOU HELP PEEL THE VEGGIES?
YOU GOT IT!

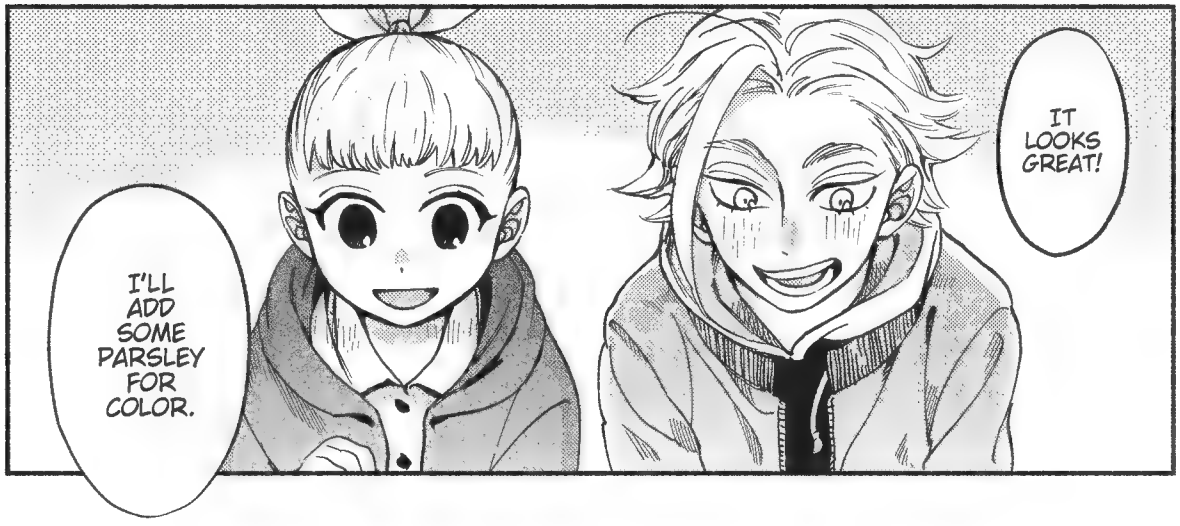
THRUP
SRIF
SRIF
SRIF
SRIF
YOU'RE REALLY GOOD AT THAT, BELLE.
...
I USED TO HELP MY MOM WITH THIS STUFF.
Ah.
THEN THERE'S YOU, DAD. HOW'RE YOU SO BAD AT THIS?
H-hey!
EXCUSE ME FOR NOT HAVING GREAT MANUAL DEXTERITY.
FUMBLE...
NEXT, WE CUT THE VEGGIES AND CHICKEN INTO BITE-SIZED PIECES.
Ooh! Meat!
CHOP CHOP
THERE.

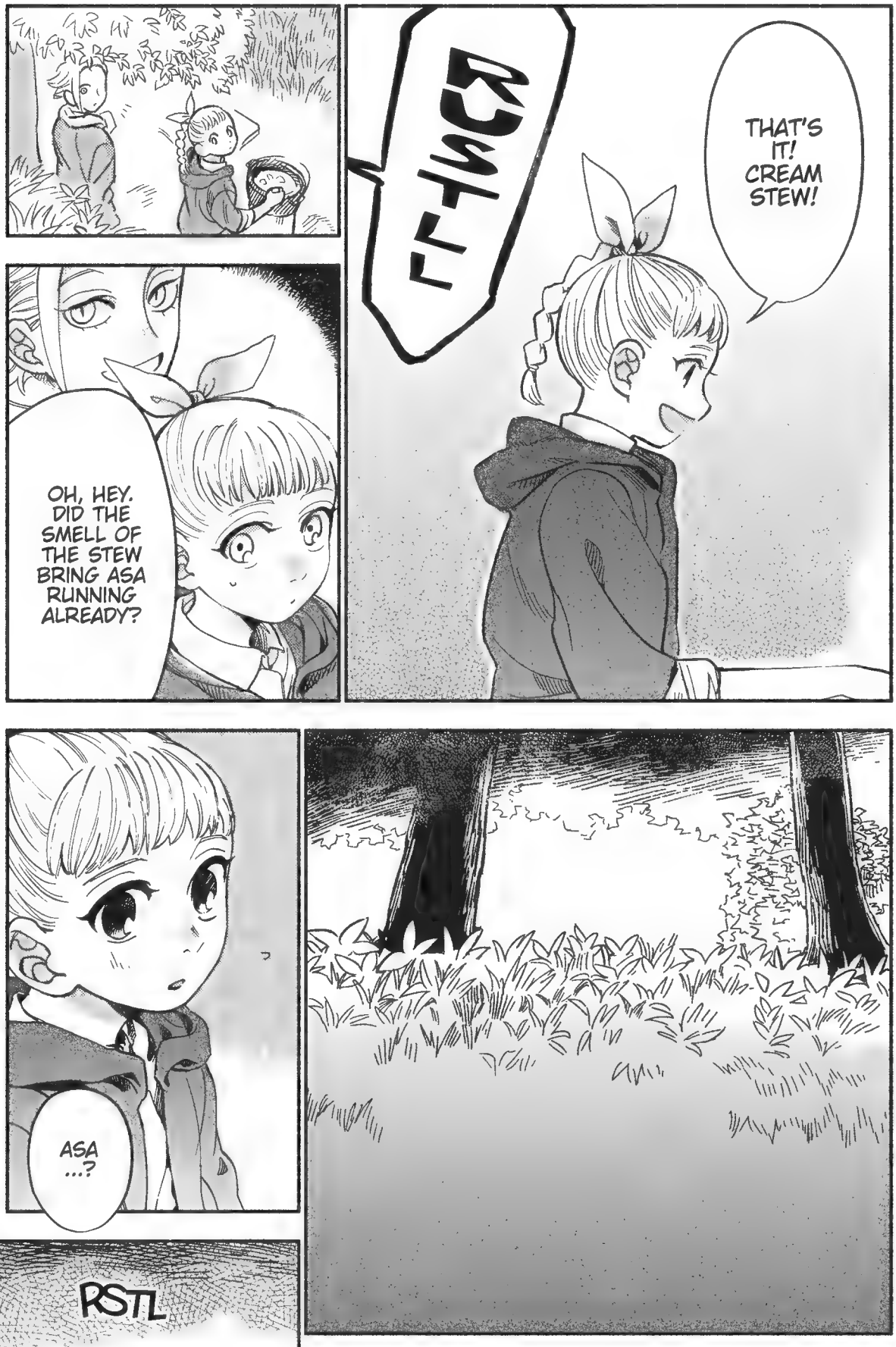
SIZZ
THEN ADD THE MEAT AND VEGGIES AND LET THEM COOK FOR A BIT.
NOW WE DRIZZLE A LITTLE OIL INTO THE POT...
SIZZ
SIZZ
ONCE THE ONIONS START TO TURN TRANS-LUCENT...
Ah! There they go.
WE'LL TAKE THE POT OFF THE HEAT...

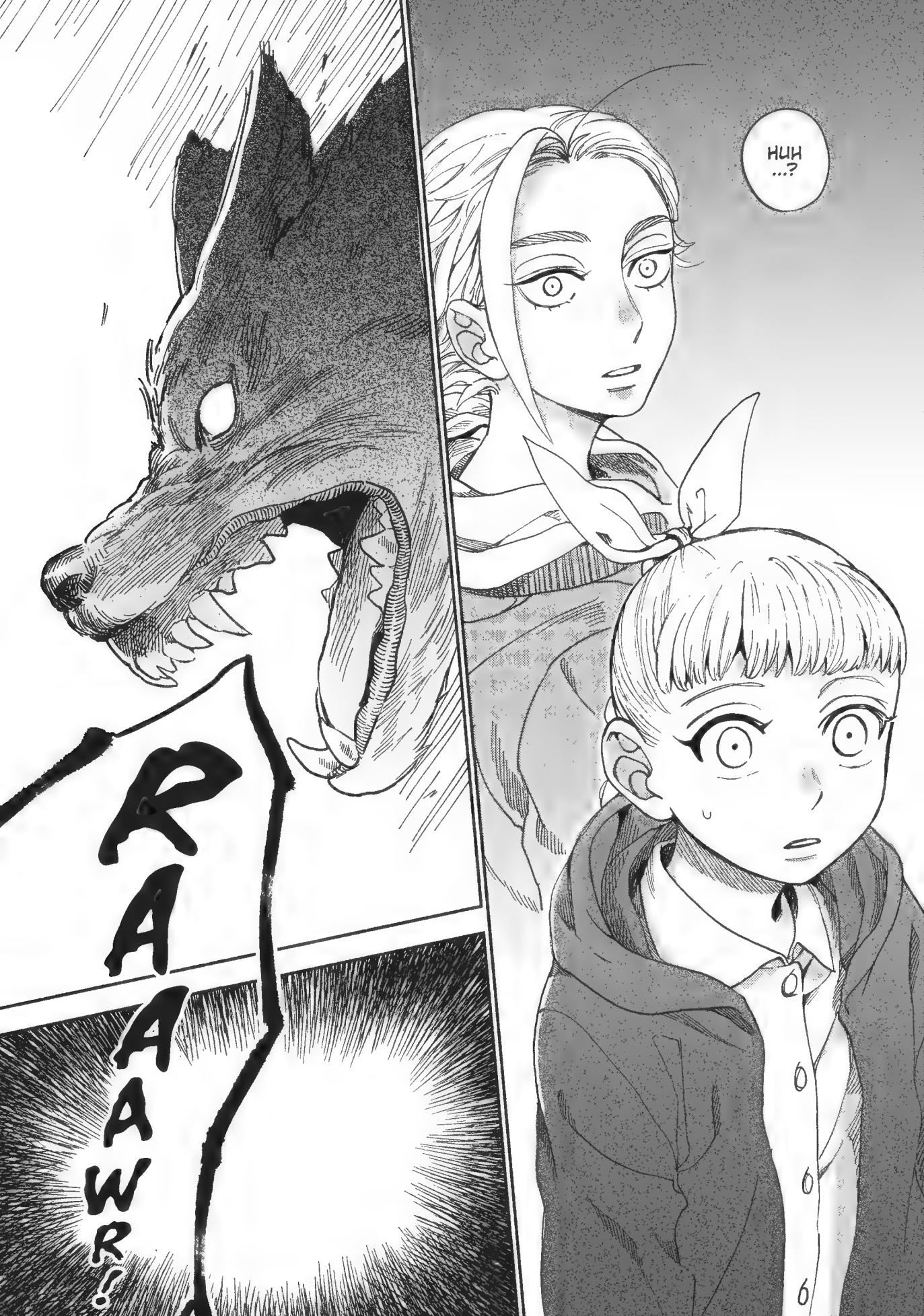
You have to take the pot off the heat for this part...
because otherwise the flour starts cooking and clumps up really fast.
Ah, gotcha.
JUST LONG ENOUGH TO SPRINKLE IN A LITTLE FLOUR AND STIR IT IN.
PWIIIF
ONCE EVERYTHING'S WELL-COATED WITH FLOUR, POUR IN SOME STOCK AND STIR IT UP.
ADD SOME MILK, STIR IT SOME MORE...
NOW EVERY-THING'S BLENDED TOGETHER, SO BACK ON THE HEAT IT GOES.

KEEP STIRRING IT UNTIL IT ALL THICKENS UP...
THEN WE PUT A LID ON IT AND WAIT.
WOW, IT'S ALL SO WHITE.
Can I taste it?
Not yet.
PLINK
OKAY, I THINK IT'S SIMMERED ENOUGH.
CLICK
CLANG


CREAM STEW
(Serves 4~5)
350 grams chicken
1 onion
1 carrot
2 medium potatoes
5 button mushrooms
parsley
2 tablespoons flour
300 cc milk
200 cc soup stock
salt and pepper


I'LL ADD SOME PARSLEY FOR COLOR.
IT LOOKS GREAT!


RSTL
THAT'S IT! CREAM STEW!
OH, HEY. DID THE SMELL OF THE STEW BRING ASA RUNNING ALREADY?
ASA ...?
RSTL


HUH ...?
RAAAWR!

YIPE YIPE!
DAD!
YOU TWO GET BACK!!

FWROOOO
STAY AWAY ...!
RURRR...
WOOSH
NOT GOOD. THERE'RE TOO MANY...!

FENCE
WHAT THE ...?
WRIGL WRIGL
YIP!
YOU LOT DO THE MOST BIZARRE THINGS!

GODOT-SAN...!
WATCHING YOU TRY THAT GAVE ME CHILLS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
WELL, ER...
YOU'VE BEEN FOLLOWING US ALL ALONG, HUH?
FIZZ
HAVEN'T YOU?
.....

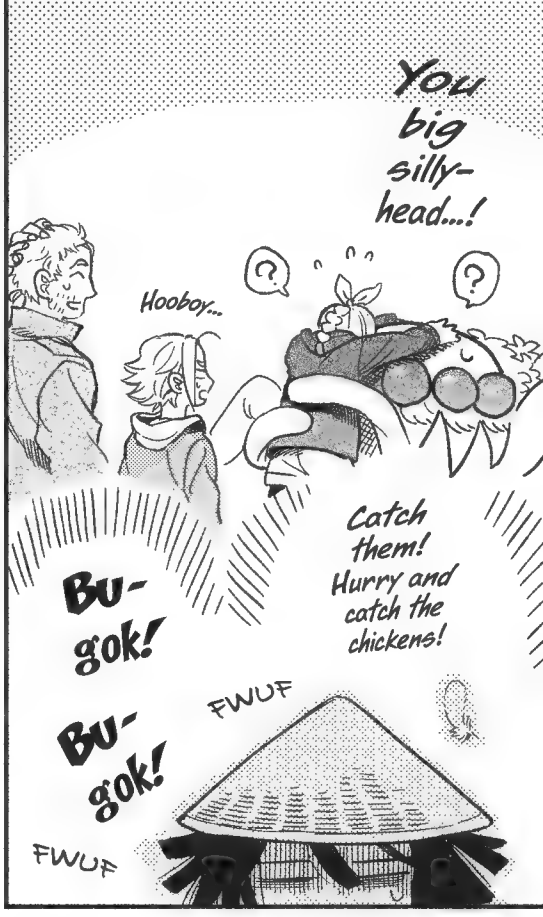
WAS IT THESE WILD DOGS THAT BROKE INTO THE COOP...?
WE CAN'T SAY FOR SURE JUST YET.
EVERY-ONE!
LOOK HERE!
CHICKEN FEATHERS!
FEATH-ERS?!
NOT UNTIL WE FIND THAT MONSTER...
ASA...

Buk...
GYAAAH!
RUSTL
RUSTL
TUP
IS THAT ONE OF OURS?
IT WASN'T EATEN?
JUST A CHICKEN ...!
Bok bok...
Buk...
Buk...
Buk...

Buk...
Buk...
Bok bok...
JUMP
Buk...
JUMP
ASA --!!

TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
!
ASA
...!!
Waaah!
WAGL
WAGL

SO...
LOOKS LIKE IT REALLY **WAS** THAT PACK OF DOGS THAT BROKE INTO THE COOP?


You big silly-head...!
Hooboy...
Catch them! Hurry and catch the chickens!
Bu-gok!
Bu-gok!
FWUF
FWUF

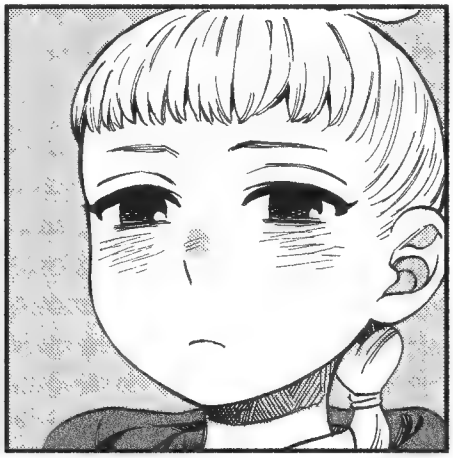
IT'S **ASA.**

Yeah. I'm fine.
You gonna be okay, Nagi?
ONE CHICKEN PROBABLY DUCKED OUT, AND THEN THE REST FLOCKED AFTER IT.

I KNOW! WAS IT REALLY THAT HUGE SPIDER THAT HERDED THEM ALL TOGETHER?
IT'S A MIRACLE THAT WE GOT THEM ALL BACK.

NOT "MONSTER." NOT "SPIDER." ASA.

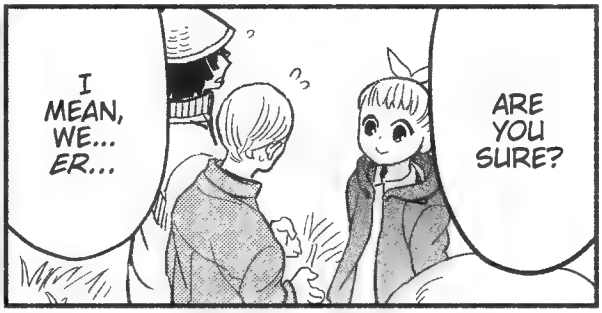
……



THANK YOU... ASA.

IT'S OKAY. I'M JUST GLAD YOU THANKED ASA.

UM, IF YOU'D LIKE...
YOU CAN ALL HAVE SOME OF THE CREAM STEW I MADE.
HUH?


I MEAN, WE... ER...
ARE YOU SURE?

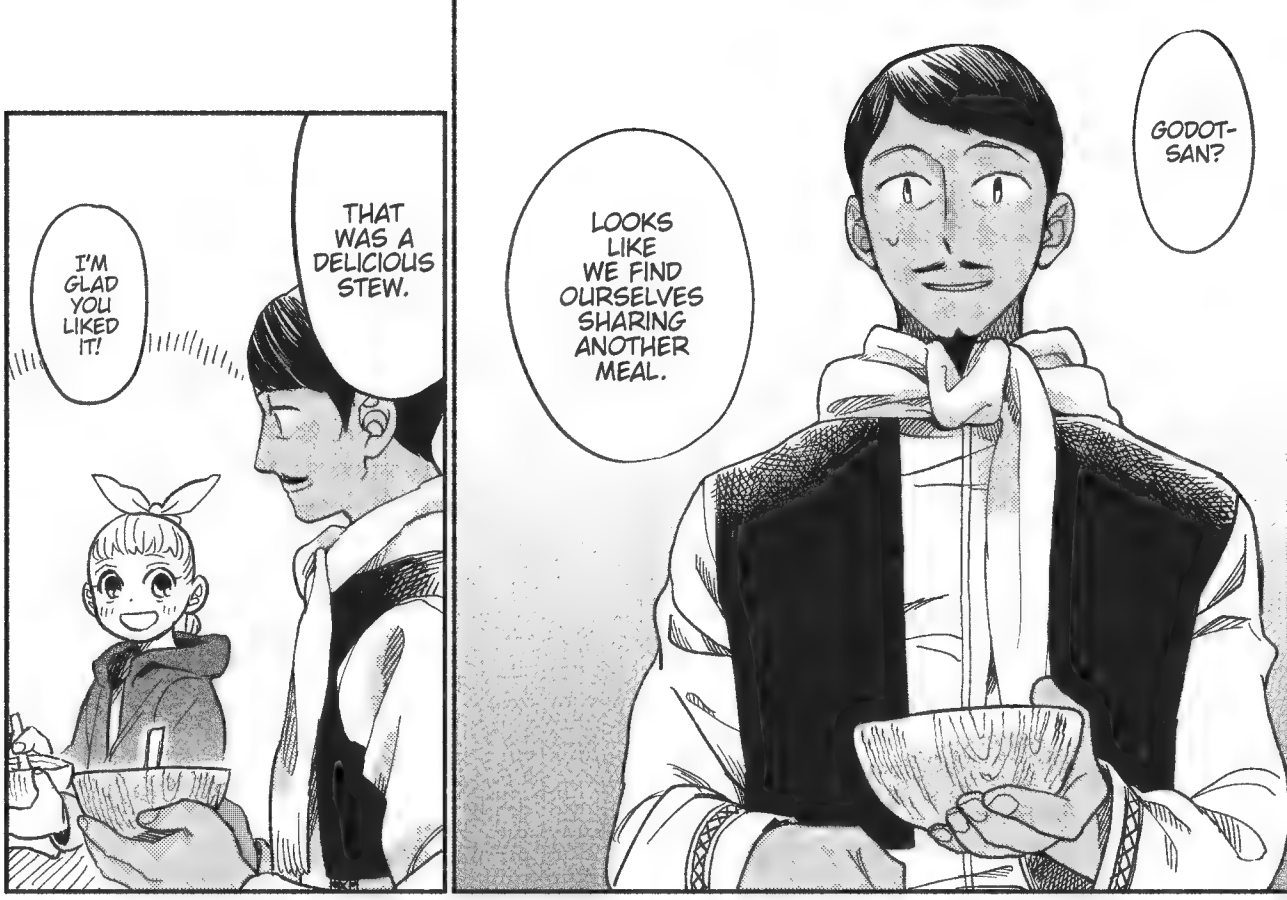
W-WELL, IF YOU INSIST...
TMP
BESIDES, I THINK I MADE WAY TOO MUCH.

A MONSTER IS A MONSTER.
HRL

HEY! OLEG...!
SHEESH.
.....

I'M NOT CON-VINCED.

NOM
THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD!
IT'S SOOO GOOD!
NAGI-CHAN.
THE ONLY THING THAT'D MAKE IT BETTER WOULD BE TOAST!
NOM
NOM
EAT MORE QUIETLY, BELLE.
SO CREAMY AND MILD AND WARM...!


GODOT-SAN?
LOOKS LIKE WE FIND OURSELVES SHARING ANOTHER MEAL.
THAT WAS A DELICIOUS STEW.
I'M GLAD YOU LIKED IT!

SO, ER...
IT SEEMS I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY.
N-NO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO...!
NO.
WE SHOULD HAVE HAD MORE CONFIDENCE IN YOU.

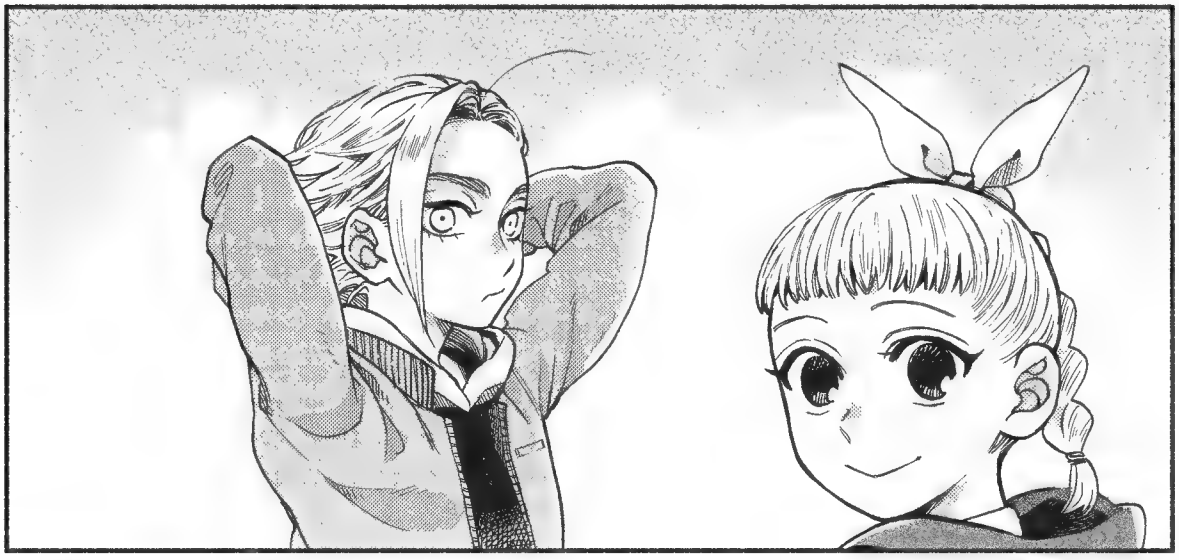
BUT DESPITE OUR SKEPTICISM, YOU STILL HELPED US.
WE'D LIKE TO WELCOME YOU TO OUR TOWN.
THERE'S ONE MORE THING I'D LIKE TO SAY.
ASA.

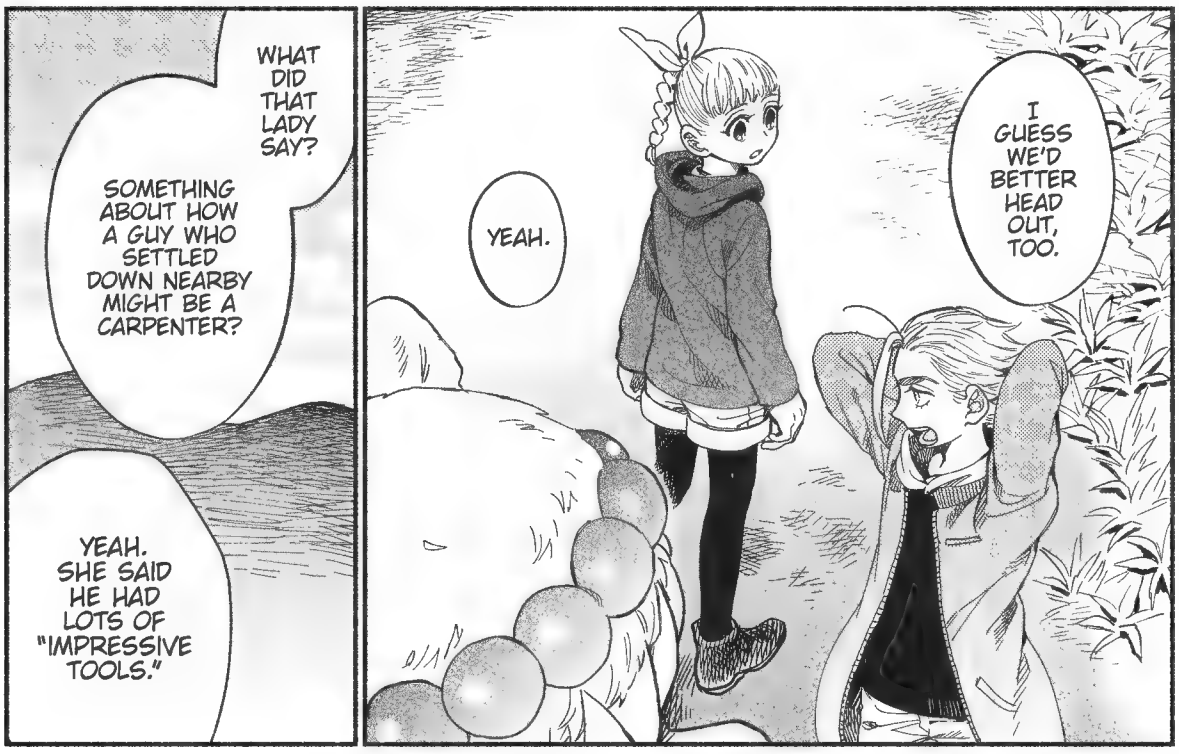
?
SO... WILL THAT DO, THEN?
IT'LL DO JUST FINE!

Chapter 8: An Eccentric & Cooking with Sea Bream - Part 1

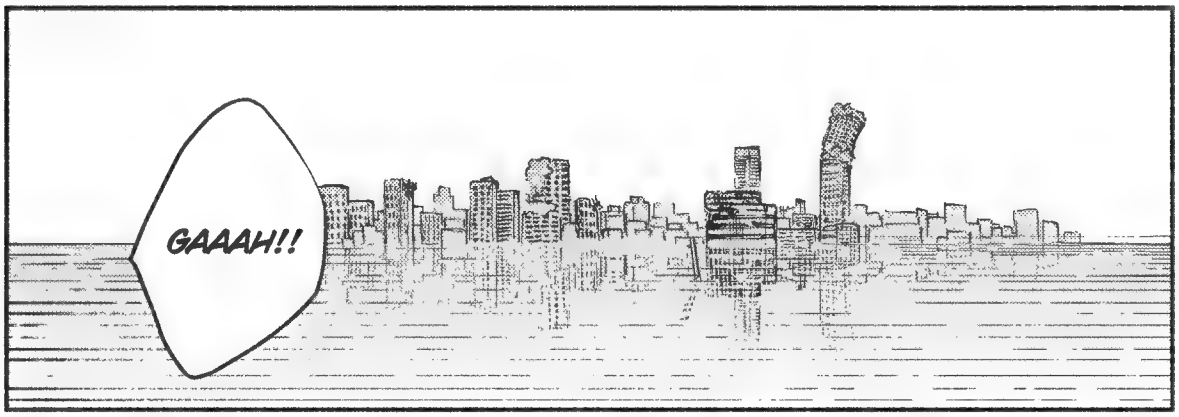
Huh
DAD! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU'RE NOT COMING WITH US?!
?!
SORRY.
I CAN'T.
I'M AFRAID YOU TWO WILL HAVE TO MANAGE ON YOUR OWN TODAY.
YESTERDAY MORNING...
WE ALL WENT INTO TOWN...
LOOK-ING FOR SOMEONE TO HELP FIX THE HOLE IN MY ROOF.

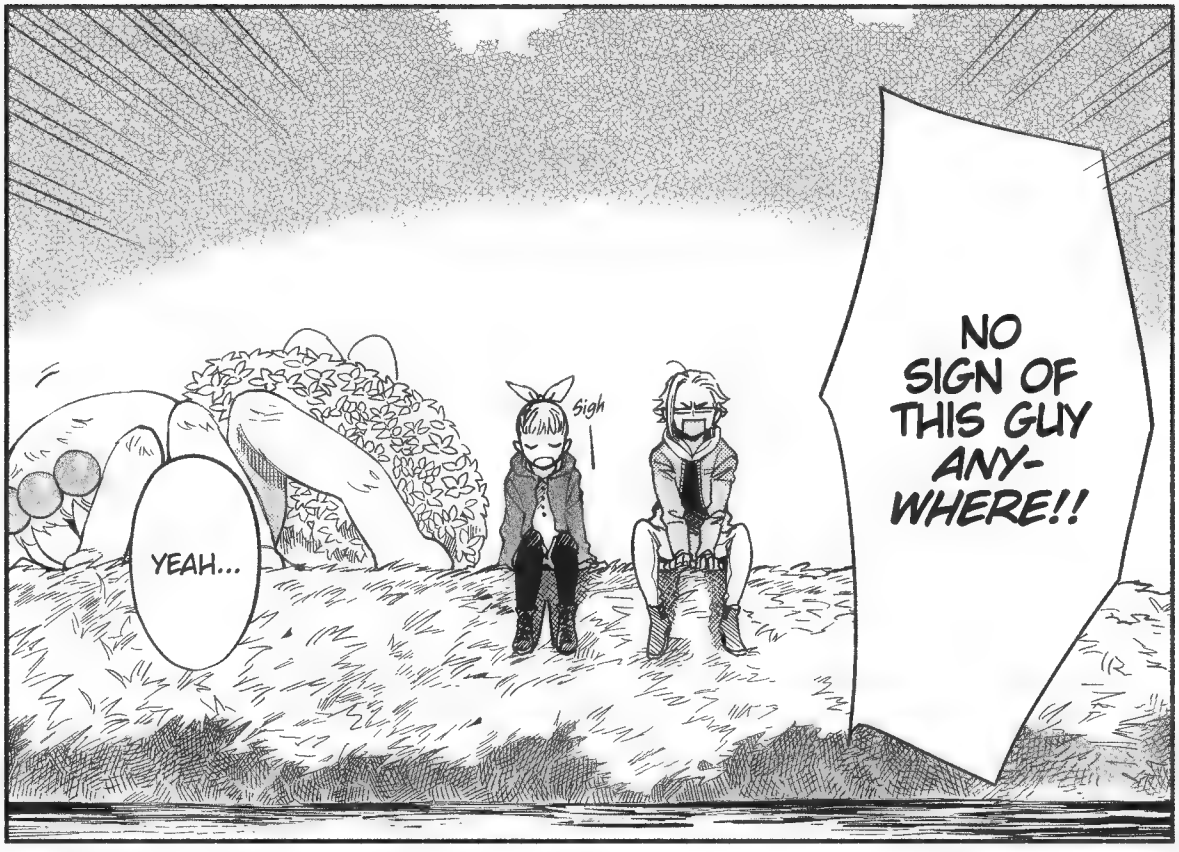
AND THAT MEANS...
WE CAN GO ANYWHERE IN TOWN WE WANT NOW!
AT FIRST, EVERYONE WAS WARY OF ASA, BUT...
AFTER THE WAY THINGS UNFOLDED THROUGH-OUT THE DAY, THEY ALL REALIZED HOW KIND ASA IS.
THE THING I WAS MOST WORRIED ABOUT HAS BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.
NOW I KNOW YOU'LL BE OKAY, SO HOW ABOUT YOU TWO AND ASA GO SEE WHAT YOU CAN FIND IN TOWN?
Ugh!
BUT WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED!
I KNOW, I KNOW. BUT IT'S WELL PAST TIME FOR ME TO START BARTERING FOR OUR SUPPLIES.

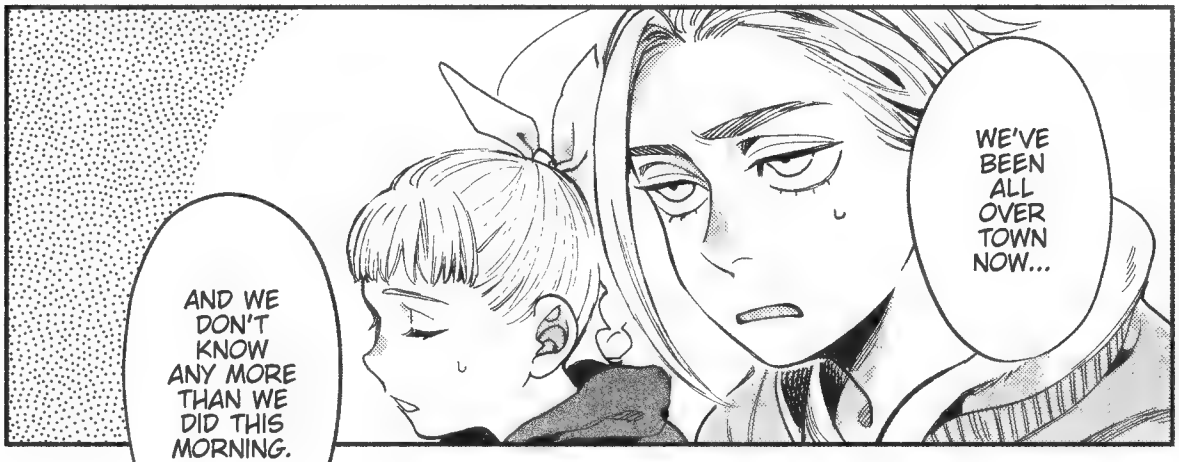



WHAT DID THAT LADY SAY?
SOMETHING ABOUT HOW A GUY WHO SETTLED DOWN NEARBY MIGHT BE A CARPENTER?
YEAH. SHE SAID HE HAD LOTS OF "IMPRESSIVE TOOLS."
YEAH.
I GUESS WE'D BETTER HEAD OUT, TOO.

TMP
TMP
Hmm.
THAT'S NOT A LOT OF INFO TO WORK WITH.
"Impressive" how...?
LET'S TRY ASKING AROUND TOWN AND SEE IF ANYONE ELSE KNOWS HIM.
I'M SORRY. I'M AFRAID I DON'T KNOW.
CAN YOU DESCRIBE HIM AT ALL?
UM...
I CAN'T SAY THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR, NO.
SORRY, I DON'T KNOW.
AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?


GAAAH!!


NO SIGN OF THIS GUY ANY-WHERE!!
Sigh
YEAH...


WE'VE BEEN ALL OVER TOWN NOW...
AND WE DON'T KNOW ANY MORE THAN WE DID THIS MORNING.

FLIT
FLIT
MAYBE SHE WAS MISREMEMBERING...
JUMP
ASA?
AW, C'MON! I DON'T WANT A REPEAT OF YESTERDAY!
NOT AGAIN!
DASH
ASA!!
RSTL
RSTL

ASA...
HUH?

ASA!

ASA,
WHERE
ARE
YOU?!

RST!...

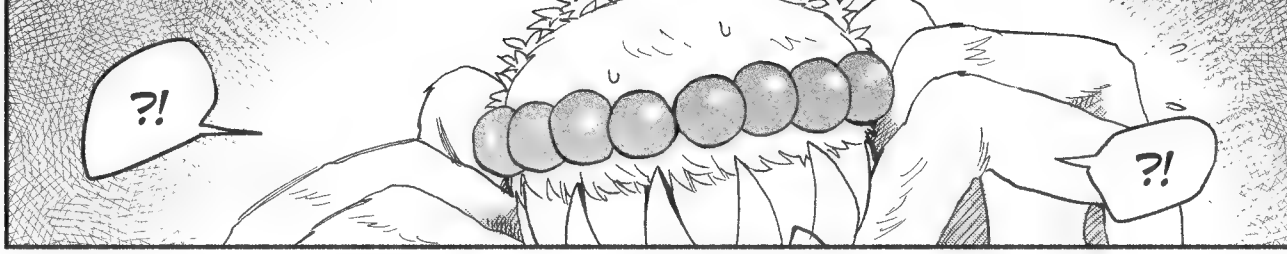
ASA?

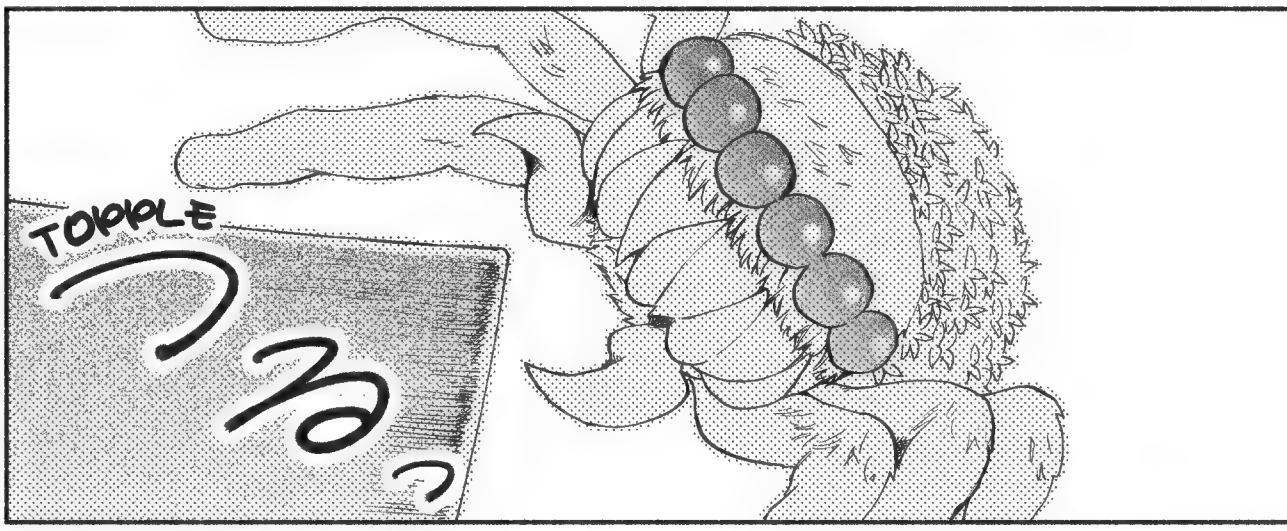
AN ABANDONED SHIP...? OR SOMETHING?
THE POOR THING LOOKS SO BATTERED.
WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?!
BUT IT'S PRETTY, TOO...!
HOW IS THAT PRETTY?!
IT, UH... IT REMINDS ME OF ASA A LITTLE.
?

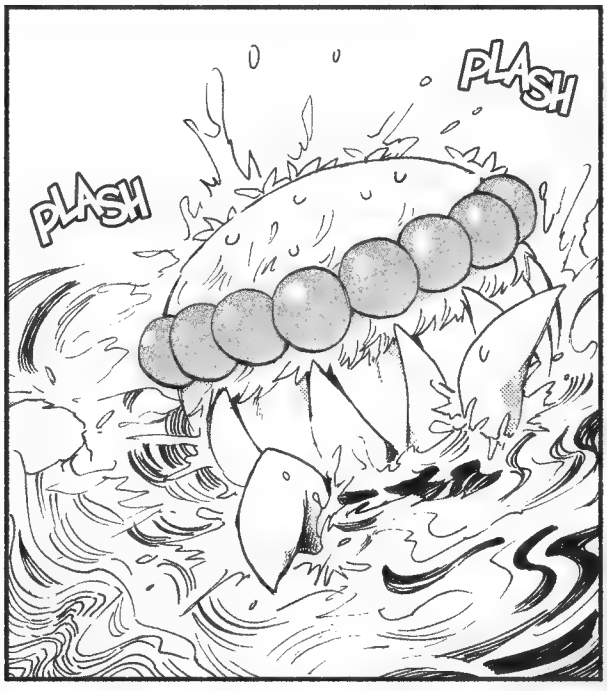
LOOKS LIKE IT'S MOORED. DO YOU THINK WE CAN GET ON BOARD?
DUNNO.
WHERE WOULD WE EVEN TRY TO CLIMB UP?
ZYOOOP
TP
ER...
JUMP

JUMP
?
TUP
TUP
TUP
Ooooh...!
Wooow!
CLAP
CLAP
SUUU
Y'KNOW ...
I JUST GAINED A NEW APPRECIATION FOR THAT CRITTER OF YOURS.
.....

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, THIEVES !!
?!

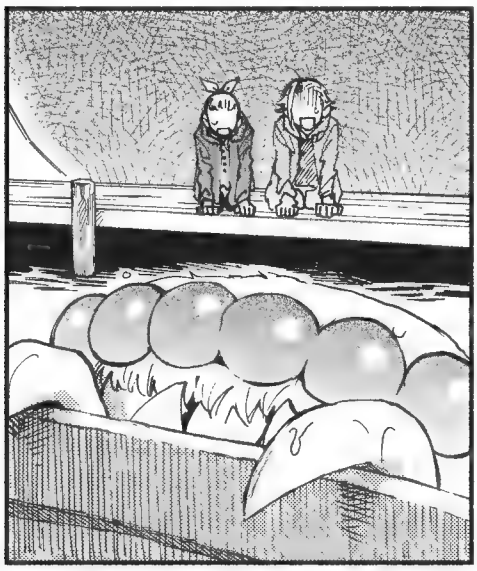

?!
?!


TOPPLE
つるっ


PLASH
PLASH

TAK

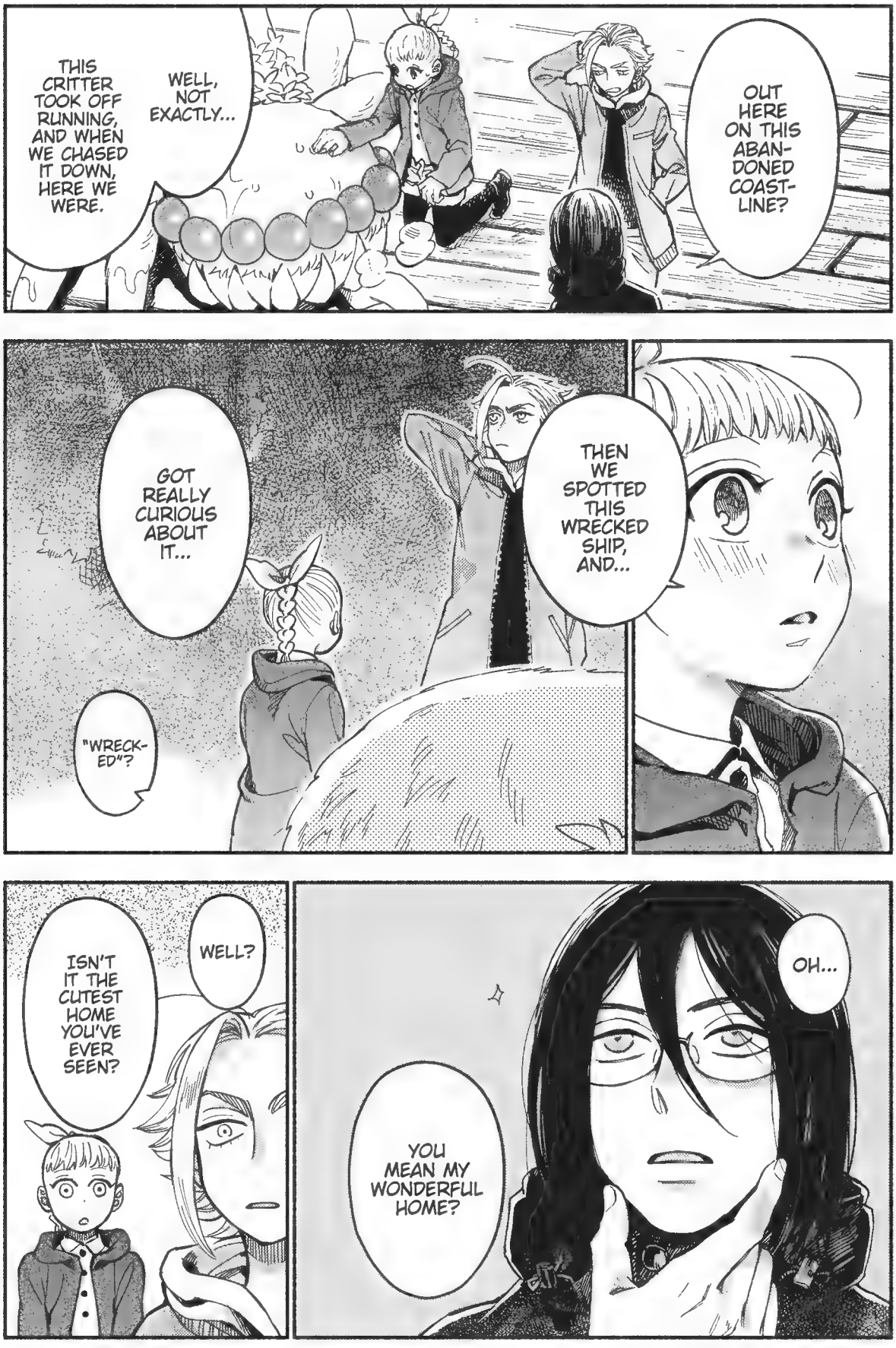
SP-
BLOOSH
ホッチャーン!!
ASA!!



WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU...?!

YOU...

HUNK
YOU'RE SO CUTE...
WHAT --?!
WELL? WHO'RE YOU TWO? YOU LOOK SUSPI-CIOUS...
THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD BE ASKING!
LOOKING FOR SOME-ONE?


OUT HERE ON THIS ABAN-DONED COAST-LINE?
WELL, NOT EXACTLY...
THIS CRITTER TOOK OFF RUNNING, AND WHEN WE CHASED IT DOWN, HERE WE WERE.
THEN WE SPOTTED THIS WRECKED SHIP, AND...
GOT REALLY CURIOUS ABOUT IT...
"WRECK-ED"?
OH...
YOU MEAN MY WONDERFUL HOME?
WELL?
ISN'T IT THE CUTEST HOME YOU'VE EVER SEEN?

IT REALLY IS A HOUSE...!

Cafe
Vie

O-OKAY...
IF YOU'RE COMING IN, COME ON.
WHY ARE YOU STANDING THERE?
KA-CHAK
WOW...!
HAVE A SEAT WHEREVER YOU'D LIKE.

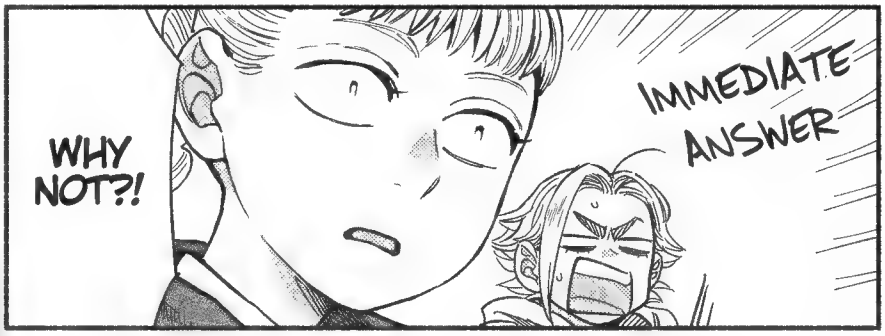
IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE SOME KIND OF RESTAU-RANT?
UM, LET ME GUESS...
.....
TAP TAP
SNFF
I THOUGHT I'D TRY MY HAND AT RUNNING A CAFÉ, SO I BUILT ONE.
HN?
THE LOCATION MAY BE UN-FORTUNATE, THOUGH. I CAN'T SEE BUSINESS BOOMING HERE.
WHAT WITH THE UTTER LACK OF FOOT TRAFFIC.
THEN... WHY DID YOU BUILD IT HERE...?!
WAIT-- YOU BUILT THIS PLACE?!
THAT'S WHAT I JUST SAID.

YOU'RE KID-DING...!
THEN...
YOU'RE THE PERSON THE ELDER WAS TALKING ABOUT...?
AGAIN, THIS IS MY HOME. I BUILT IT MYSELF.
"THE ELDER"?
KTJNK
UM!
MY NAME IS NAGI.
THIS IS BELLE.
AND THAT'S ASA.
I KNOW IT'S RUDE TO ASK SOMEONE YOU'VE JUST MET FOR A FAVOR, BUT...

THE HOUSE WHERE ASA AND I LIVE GOT DAMAGED.
IS THERE ANY CHANCE YOU COULD HELP US FIX IT?
COULD YOU PLEASE AT LEAST CONSIDER IT?
TINK

NO.

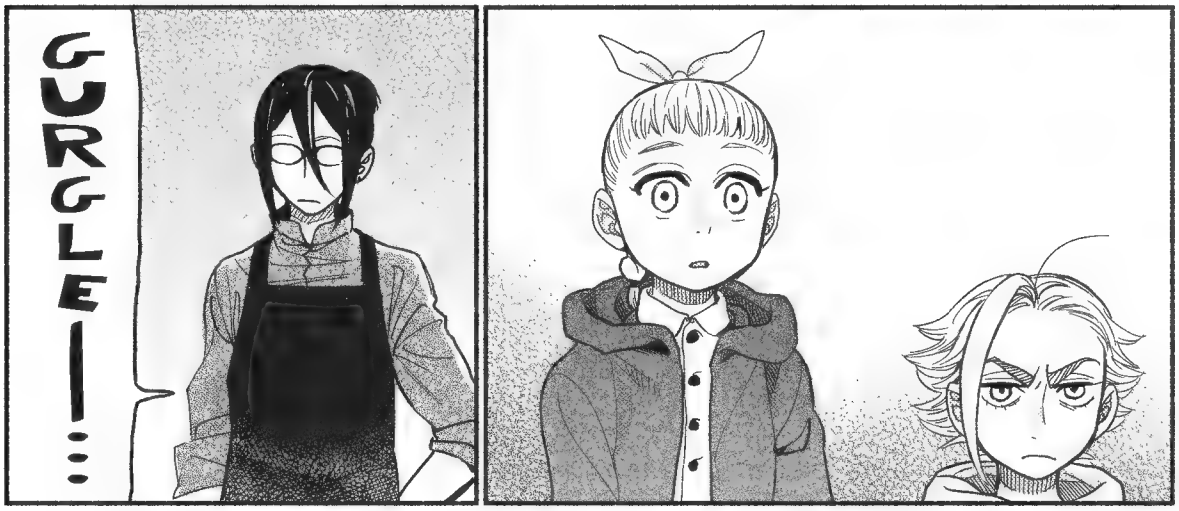
THIS REQUEST CAME OUT OF NOWHERE.
I'M UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO SAY YES.
HEY!

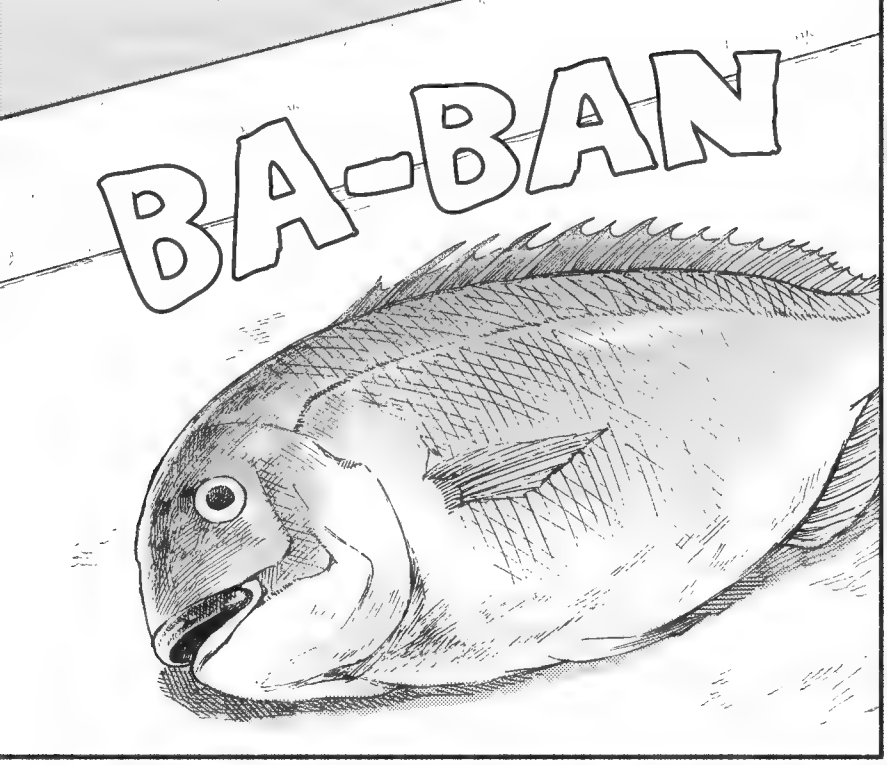

WHY NOT?!
IMMEDIATE ANSWER

THAT DOESN'T MATTER.
IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT PAYMENT, WE CAN TALK IT OVER AND--
YOU'RE A CARPENTER, AREN'T YOU?!

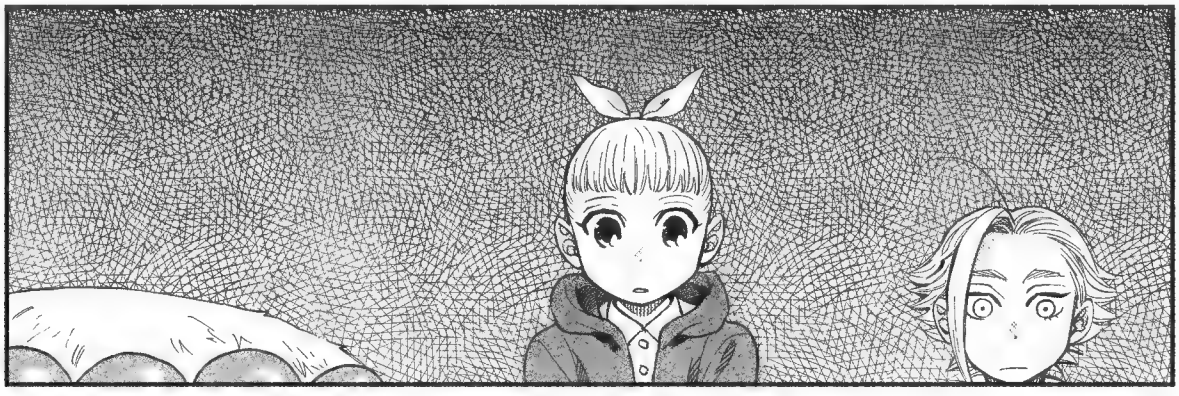
I'M A CAFÉ OWNER NOW.
BE-SIDES...

NOT A CARPEN-TER.


GURGLE!..


BA-BAN

ALL THIS TALKING MADE ME HUNGRY.
TURN



STARE

THAT'S A FISH, ALL RIGHT...
A FISH ...?

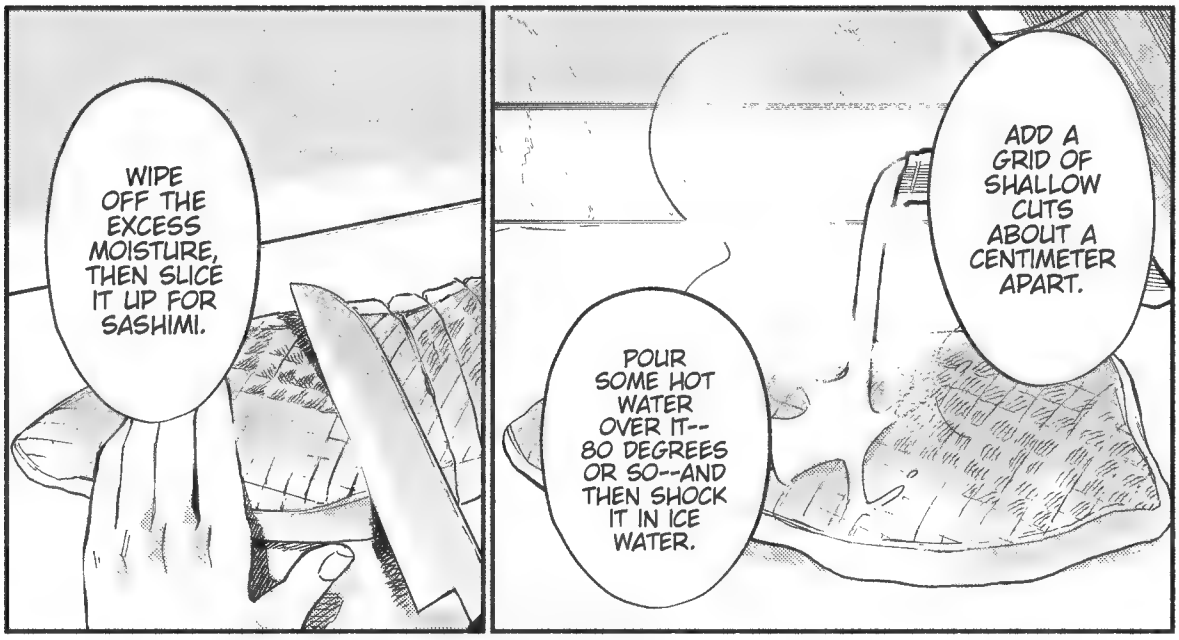
I MAY AS WELL START GETTING SOME BUZZ GOING.
THIS IS A CAFÉ.
HUH?
I caught this fish earlier.
DO YOU WANT SOME?
SKFF
SKFF
SKFF
SKFF
SKFF
SKFF
I GUESS THAT'LL DO.
Oops. I should've done this inside a plastic bag.
EW! ONE HIT ME IN THE FACE!
SORRY.
FLAP

WOULD YOU MIND EXPLAINING AS YOU GO, SO I CAN LEARN HOW TO DO THIS?
UM!
SURE, WHY NOT.
IT'S NOT VERY HARD.
I'VE NEVER CLEANED OR FILLETED A FISH THIS BIG.
REPEAT ON THE OTHER SIDE.
← You'll pull out something like this.
KRIK
TWIST THE KNIFE IN AN ARC TO SEVER THE BACK OF THE GILL FROM THE BONE.
KRIK
LIFT THE GILL FLAP AND SLIDE THE KNIFE IN.
ONCE YOU'VE GOT MOST OF THE SCALES SCRAPED OFF...
THE NEXT STEP IS REMOVING THE GILLS.

SRF
THEN INSERT THE KNIFE AT THE VERY BOTTOM POINT OF THE GILL FLAP...
AND SLICE THE BELLY OPEN STRAIGHT TO THE ANUS.
SRF SRF
REMOVE THE INNARDS, AND THEN...
THOROUGH-LY RINSE OUT THE CAVITY WITH RUNNING WATER.
PLISH
PLISH

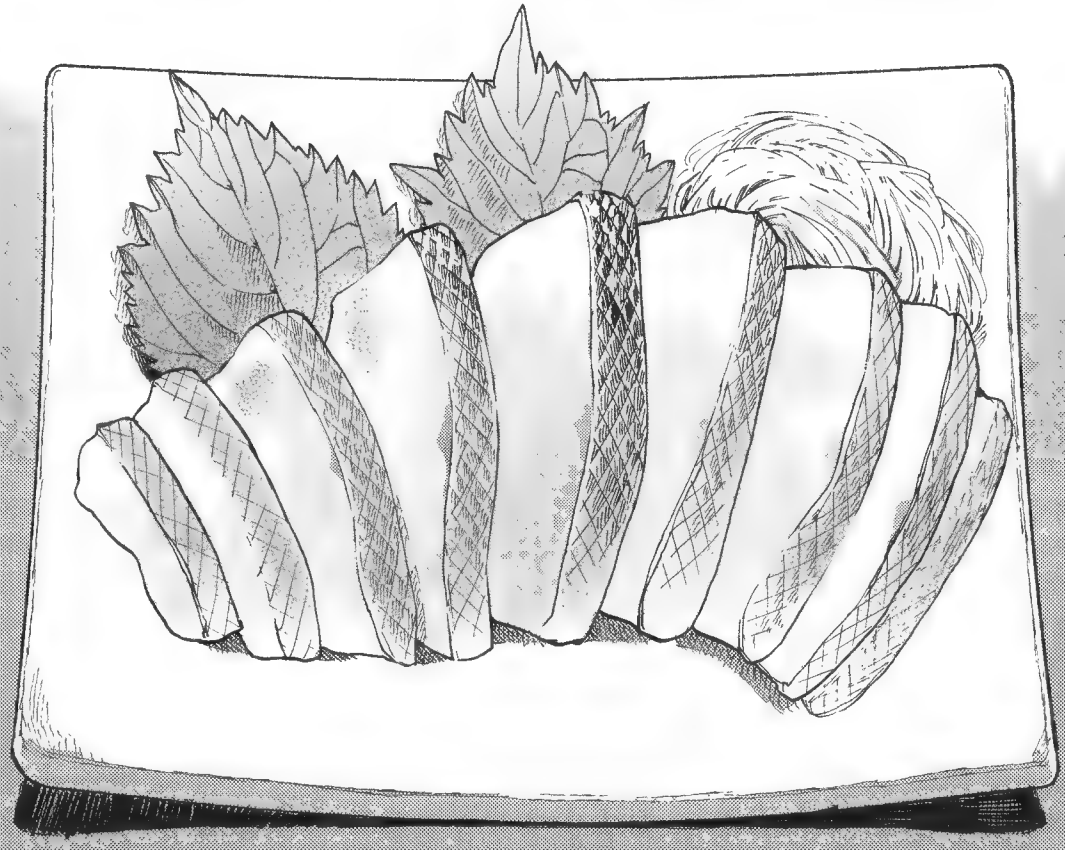
INSERT YOUR KNIFE AT THE TOP OF THE FISH'S BACK.
SLIDE IT ALONG THE SPINE TOWARD THE TAIL...
TO CUT ALL THE ABDOMINAL BONES OFF THE BACKBONE.
Tasuki Cut
(Diagonal Cut)
YOU REMOVE THE HEAD WITH WHAT'S CALLED A "TASUKI" CUT, RIGHT BEHIND THE PECTORAL FIN.
CUT DIAGONALLY DOWNWARD THROUGH THE BONE, THEN FLIP THE FISH OVER.
AGAIN, REPEAT ON THE OTHER SIDE TO COMPLETELY REMOVE THE HEAD.
CHOP
THERE YOU GO. TWO CLEANED FILLETS.

CAREFULLY PICK OUT THE ABDOMINAL BONES, DAMAGING THE FLESH AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE.
THEN GET READY TO SLICE IT.
We'll save one of the other fillets for later.
IF YOU TAKE THE FILLET WITH THE SPINE AND USE THE SAME PROCESS TO REMOVE THE BONES FROM ITS OTHER SIDE...
YOU'LL HAVE THE FULL THREE FILLETS.
BUT THERE'S ONE IMPORTANT STEP FIRST.
SLICE IT?
SO YOU'RE MAKING IT INTO SASHIMI?
YEP.
WE'LL PARBOIL IT QUICKLY TO BRING OUT THE UMAMI.
A SEA BREAM'S SKIN IS DELICIOUS, SO...


WIPE OFF THE EXCESS MOISTURE, THEN SLICE IT UP FOR SASHIMI.
POUR SOME HOT WATER OVER IT-- 80 DEGREES OR SO--AND THEN SHOCK IT IN ICE WATER.
ADD A GRID OF SHALLOW CUTS ABOUT A CENTIMETER APART.

※80°C = 176°F.

SEA BREAM SASHIMI



!
IT'S SWEET...!
WOW, IT'S BEEN FOREVER SINCE I HAD RAW FISH!
?
OOOH!
THANK YOU FOR THIS!
FOR THE LAST WHILE, I'VE ONLY HAD FISH JERKY.
THAT MAKES THIS EVEN BETTER IN COMPARISON!
Mmm~!
Aaah!
IT'S SO TENDER AND PLUMP!
DID IT REALLY GET *THIS* GOOD...
FROM YOU SLICING IT FRESH AND POURING HOT WATER OVER IT?

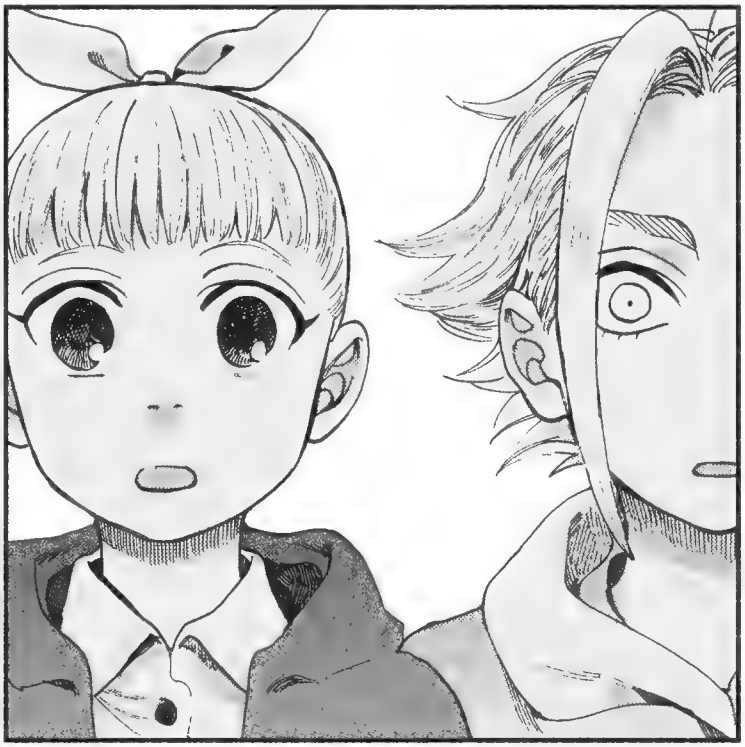
YOU SAID YOUR NAME IS NAGI, RIGHT?
Is it yummy?
I'VE CONSID-ERED YOUR REQUEST.
IF YOU'LL DO ONE SMALL THING FOR ME, I COULD PROBABLY HELP YOU.
REALLY?!
OF COURSE! I'LL HELP ANY WAY I CAN!
GREAT. IT'S A SIMPLE THING, HONESTLY.

I WANT...
YOU TWO TO WORK HERE AT MY CAFÉ.

Chapter 9: An Eccentric & Cooking with Sea Bream - Part 2

I WANT...
YOU TWO TO WORK HERE AT MY CAFÉ.

WHAAAT?!



YOU WANT US TO WORK HERE...?
YOUR REQUEST WAS EQUALLY OUT OF THE BLUE.
WHAT THE HECK?!
WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?!

SO FIRST...
I'D LIKE YOU TWO TO BRING IN SOME CUSTOMERS.

AS YOU CAN SEE, NO ONE EVER COMES OUT THIS WAY, SO...
I HAVE NO CUS-TOMERS.

BUT IF PEOPLE VISITED EVEN ONE TIME...
I'M POSITIVE THEY'D REALIZE WHAT A LOVELY CAFÉ THIS IS.
The atmosphere is good. The food is better.
Well, aren't you confident?

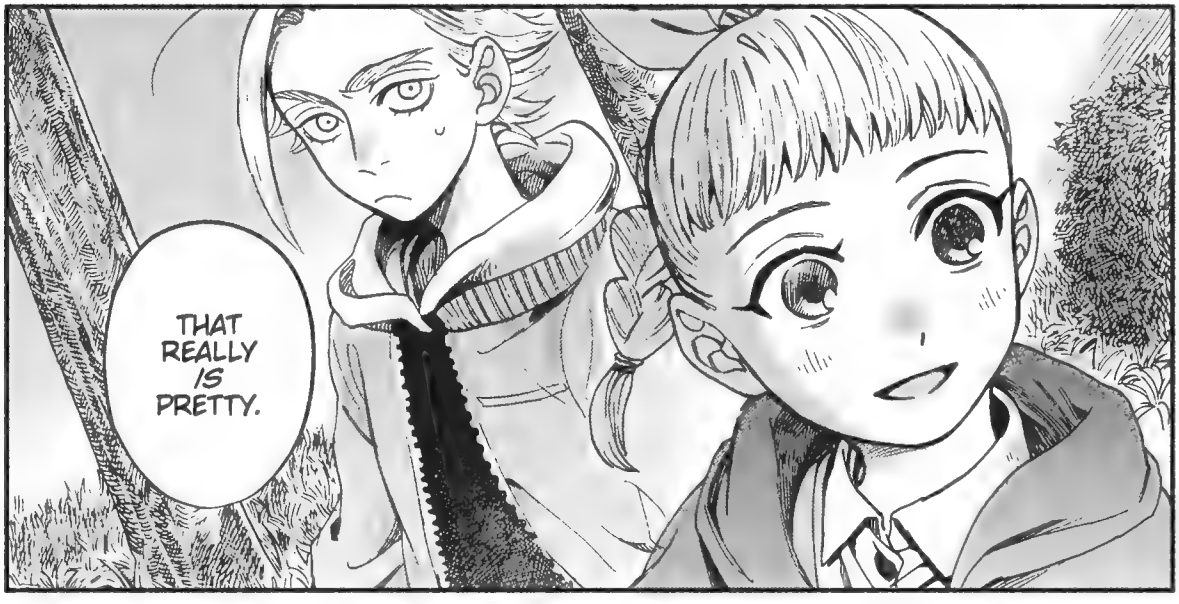
IF YOU WANT CUSTOMERS, WHY NOT GET THEM YOURSELF?
ADULTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO TRUST CHILDREN AND FOLLOW THEIR LEAD, IF ONLY TO HUMOR THEM.
Wow.
WHAT KIND OF REQUEST IS THAT?!
DON'T WORRY.
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A LONG-TERM COMMIT-MENT.
DO YOU HAVE THE FIRST CLUE HOW SKETCHY THAT SOUNDS?
!
BE-SIDES...
ASA INTRIGUES ME.

IF YOU AGREE TO WORK FOR ME...
THEN I DON'T MIND HELPING TO FIX YOUR HOME.
WHAT DO YOU SAY?
EXCUSE US FOR A MINUTE!!
DRAG
Eep!
GRAB
I--
.....
AH!

DMPA
DMPA
DMPA
DMPA...
.....
After he gave us food and everything!
WHAT WAS THAT FOR? RUNNING OFF LIKE THAT WAS RUDE!
HEY! BELLE ...!
Feh!
HE'S THE ONE BEING RUDE.
WE'RE IN A BIND, AND HE KNOWS IT!
IT'S TOTALLY OBVIOUS HE'S UP TO NO GOOD!

NAGI.
I DON'T KNOW...
LEAN
DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO DENY IT.
HUH?!
YOU WERE GONNA AGREE RIGHT ON THE SPOT, WEREN'T YOU?
HOW INNO-CENT CAN YOU GET?!
THINK BEFORE YOU AGREE TO STUFF LIKE THAT!
Y-YEAH, KINDA...
...

KICK
UGH, IT'S SO ANNOY-ING.
BUT...
PEOPLE ASSUME KIDS LIKE US ARE GULLIBLE!
HE'S OBVIOUSLY OUT TO TAKE AD-VANTAGE OF US!
I THINK I'D LIKE TO HAVE MORE CHANCES TO TALK TO HIM.
SERI-OUSLY...?
HUH?

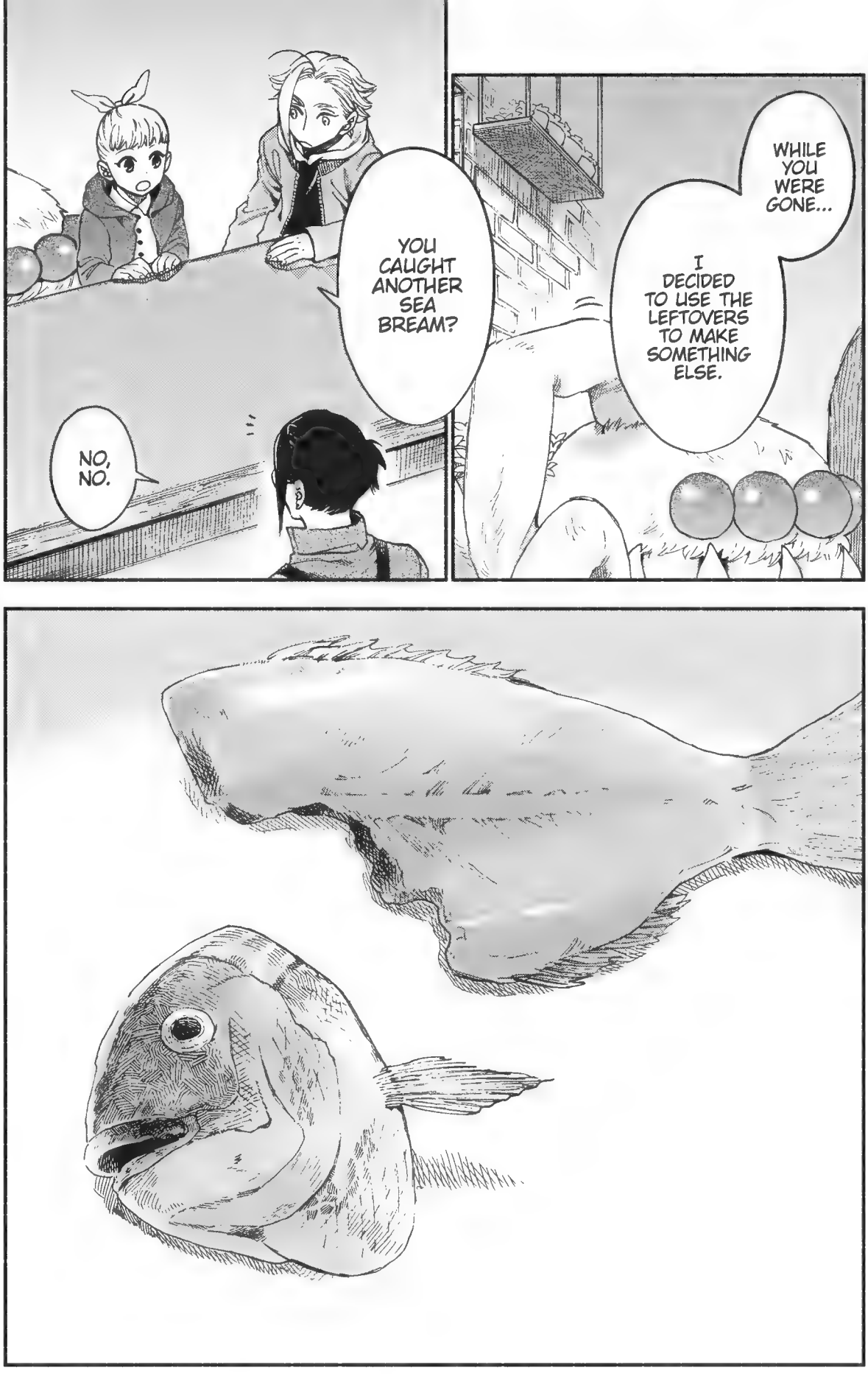

THAT REALLY IS PRETTY.

HUH?
Y'KNOW, I'M STARTING TO THINK YOU TWO ARE AWFULLY SIMILAR.
YOU.
YOU'RE SO CUTE
?
SIGH...
OKAY, FINE.
IF YOU'RE POSITIVE YOU DON'T MIND, I WON'T INTER-FERE.
ARE YOU SURE?
Let's go.
JUST DON'T EXPECT ME TO HELP YOU.
TUMP
TUMP
O-OKAY!

YOU LEFT SO QUICKLY...
BUT YOU CAME BACK ALMOST AS FAST.
I'M SORRY WE LEFT IN SUCH A RUSH!
HMPH.
YOU STILL LOOK SULKY ABOUT IT, THOUGH.
OH, SHUT UP.
SO. HAVE YOU MADE A DECISION?

I NEED TO TEND MY GARDEN IN THE MORNING...
SO I'M ONLY AVAILABLE IN THE AFTER-NOONS.
BUT I'LL BE HAPPY TO WORK HERE.
FAIR ENOUGH.
YES, I HAVE!
AND YOU?
YEAH, NO. NOT A CHANCE.
Not happenin'

AND YOU'RE A PACKAGE DEAL WITH NAGI, HMM?
WELL.
LET'S GET BACK TO COOKING.
THERE'S MORE?
YES, WHICH MEANS...
YOU ATE UP THE KEY INGREDIENT FOR WHAT I WAS ORIGINALLY PLANNING TO MAKE.
BUT WE ALREADY HAD THE SASHIMI.

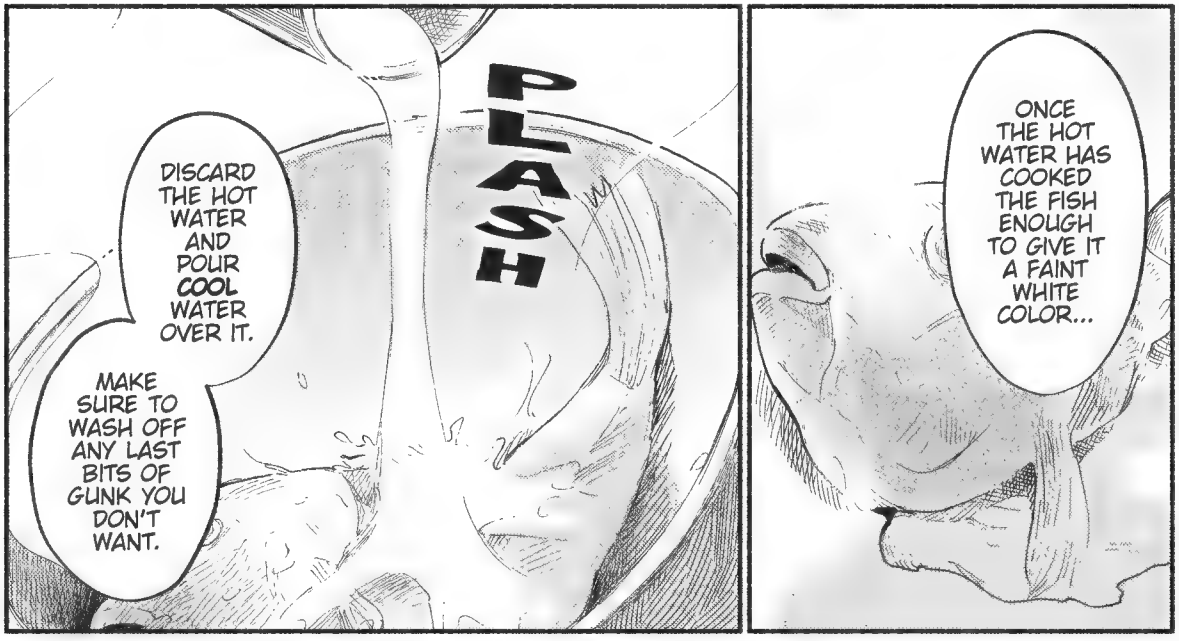

YOU CAUGHT ANOTHER SEA BREAM?
NO, NO.
WHILE YOU WERE GONE...
I DECIDED TO USE THE LEFTOVERS TO MAKE SOMETHING ELSE.

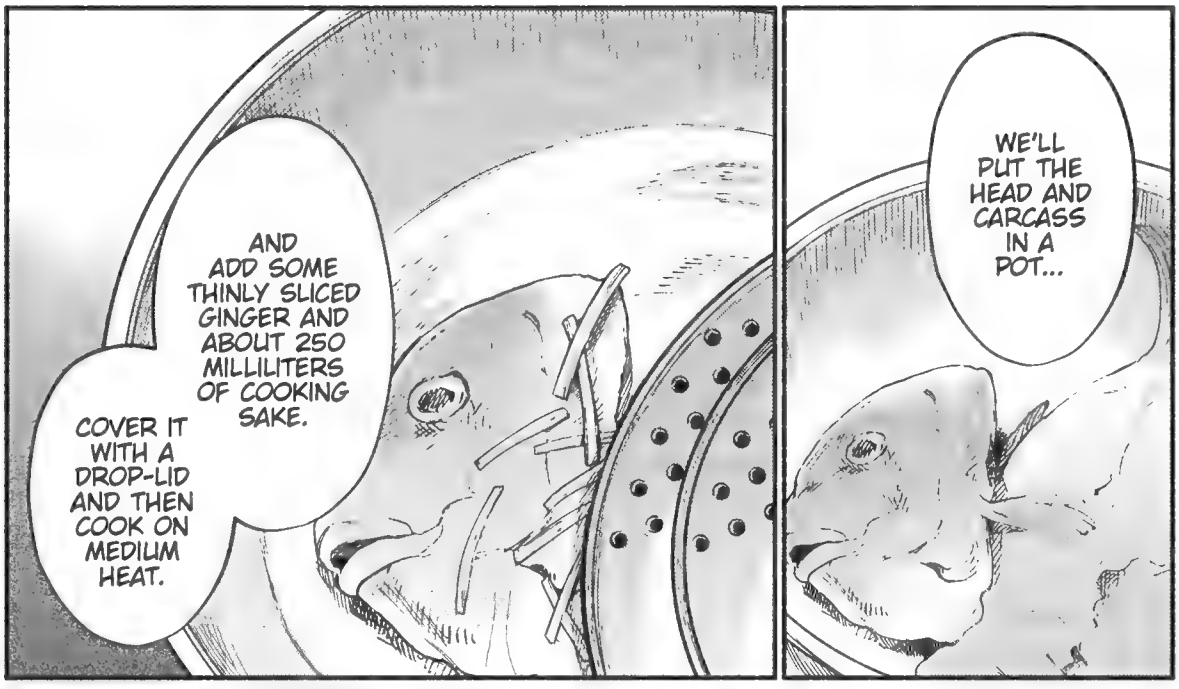
ALL I HAVE IS THE ONE FILLET AND CARCASS FROM EARLIER.
THE FISH'S CARCASS? YOU CAN EAT THOSE?
What edible bits are left?
OF COURSE YOU CAN EAT THEM.
There's still plenty of meat clinging to the bones.
AS PREDATORS, THE LEAST WE CAN DO TO HONOR THE LIVES WE TAKE...
IS TO EAT EVERY POSSIBLE PART OF AN ANIMAL, WITH MINIMAL WASTE.
BESIDES, A SEA BREAM CARCASS IS DELICIOUS.
There are lots of tender, fatty bits on it.
MWAH
Ooh...

PUT THE HEAD AND THE CARCASS IN A BOWL...
THEN POUR HOT WATER OVER IT-- ABOUT 90 DEGREES THIS TIME.
BLRBL BLRBL
AHEM!
RIGHT, THEN. WE'LL START BY CLEANING THE CARCASS THOROUGHLY.
STARE

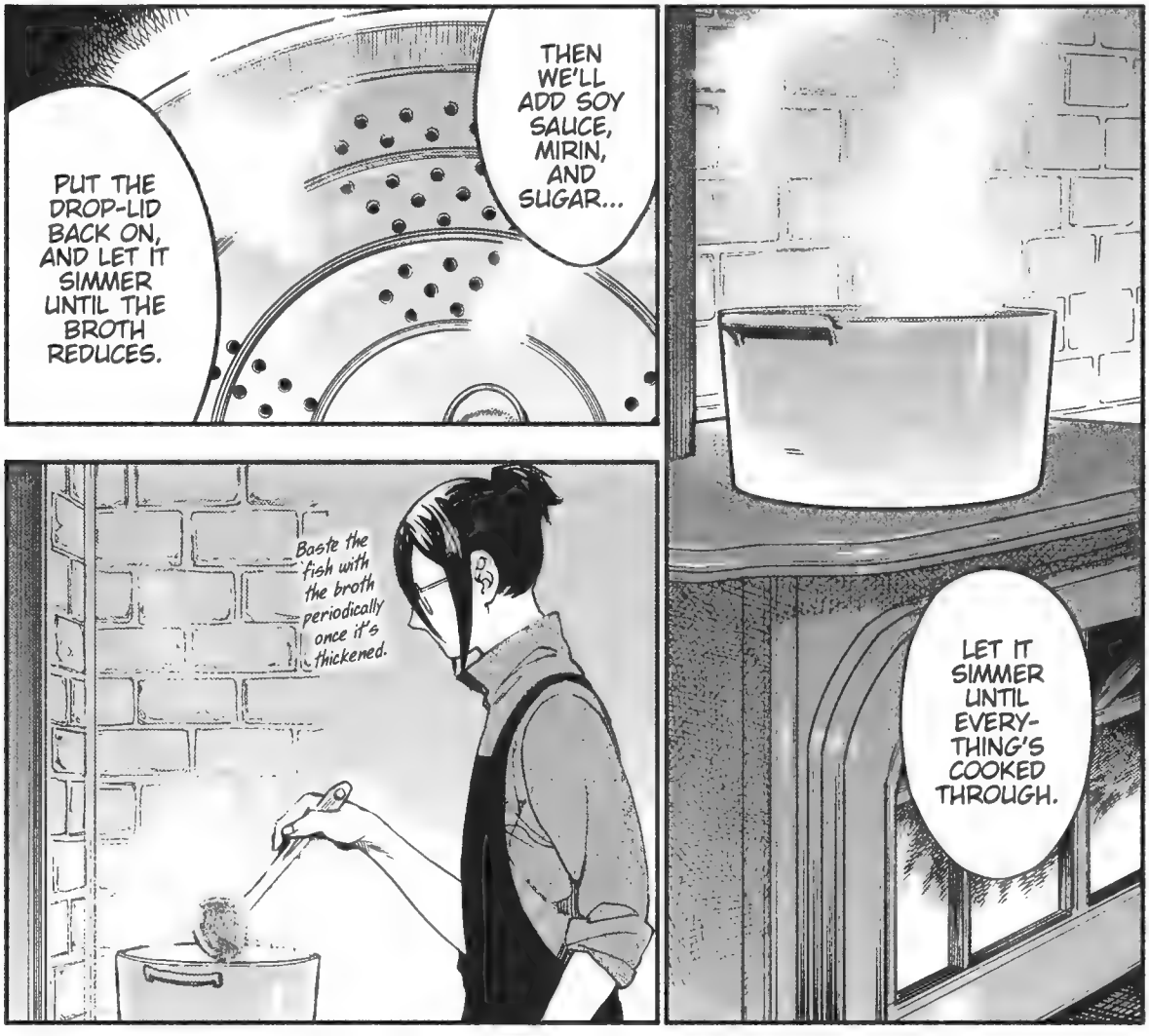
※90°C = 194°F.

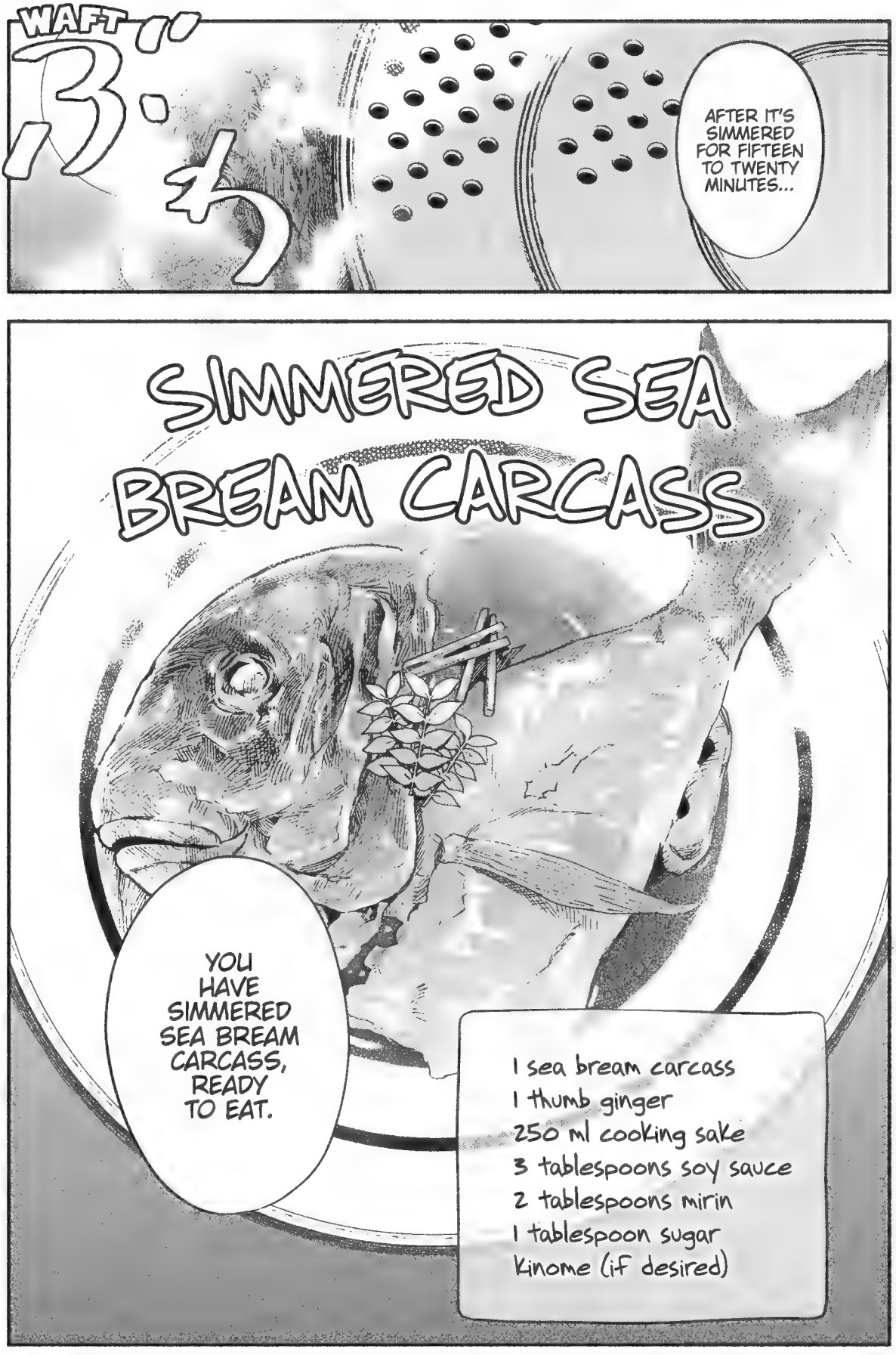
THIS TIME IT'S MOSTLY TO WASH OUT IMPURITIES AND OILS THAT WOULD MAKE THE FISH SMELL.
AGAIN WITH THE HOT WATER?


DISCARD THE HOT WATER AND POUR COOL WATER OVER IT.
MAKE SURE TO WASH OFF ANY LAST BITS OF GUNK YOU DON'T WANT.
PLASH
ONCE THE HOT WATER HAS COOKED THE FISH ENOUGH TO GIVE IT A FAINT WHITE COLOR...


WE'LL PUT THE HEAD AND CARCASS IN A POT...
AND ADD SOME THINLY SLICED GINGER AND ABOUT 250 MILLILITERS OF COOKING SAKE.
COVER IT WITH A DROP-LID AND THEN COOK ON MEDIUM HEAT.

※A drop-lid is a round lid that floats on top of the liquid in a pot.


THEN WE'LL ADD SOY SAUCE, MIRIN, AND SUGAR...
PUT THE DROP-LID BACK ON, AND LET IT SIMMER UNTIL THE BROTH REDUCES.
LET IT SIMMER UNTIL EVERY-THING'S COOKED THROUGH.
Baste the fish with the broth periodically once it's thickened.


WAFT
AFTER IT'S SIMMERED FOR FIFTEEN TO TWENTY MINUTES...
SIMMERED SEA BREAM CARCASS
YOU HAVE SIMMERED SEA BREAM CARCASS, READY TO EAT.
1 sea bream carcass
1 thumb ginger
250 ml cooking sake
3 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons mirin
1 tablespoon sugar
Kinome (if desired)

OOOOH!
IT'S SO GLOSSY!
THE SOY SAUCE BROTH SMELLS SOOO GOOD.
HEH.
THAT ISN'T THE ONLY MAIN DISH, THOUGH!
I KEPT A SECRET WEAPON IN RESERVE.
A SECRET WEAPON ...?
THIS.

WHAT IS IT?
I SLICED THE OTHER FILLET AND MARINATED IT IN SOY SAUCE AND SESAME SEEDS FOR ABOUT AN HOUR.
WE'LL PUT THE SLICES ON TOP OF SOME FRESH STEAMED RICE...
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
GARNISH IT WITH SOME CHOPPED GREEN ONION AND SHISO LEAVES, AND THEN...
Ooooh...

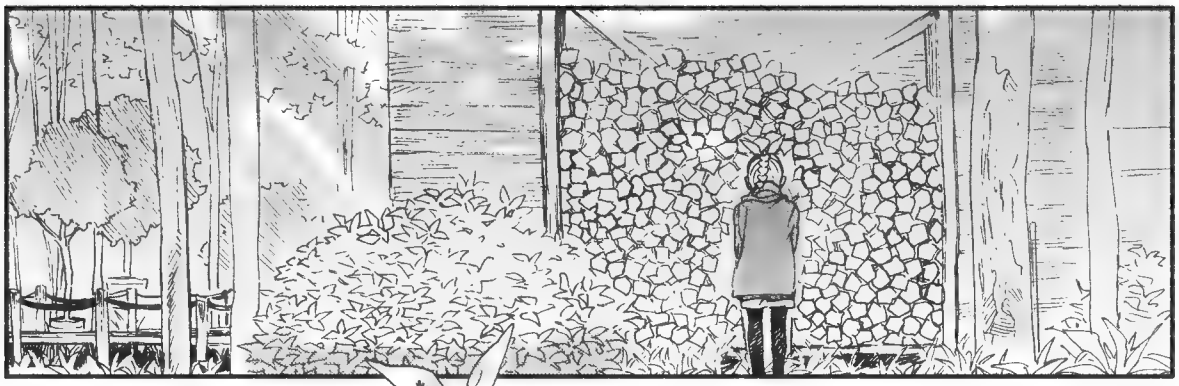
POUR HOT GREEN TEA OVER IT ALL.
BLRBL
BLRBL
AH!
I SUPPOSE YOU BOTTOM-LESS PITS CAN HAVE SOME.
NOW THAT JUST ISN'T FAIR.
GURRRGL—
IT LOOKS REALLY, REALLY, REALLY GOOD--!

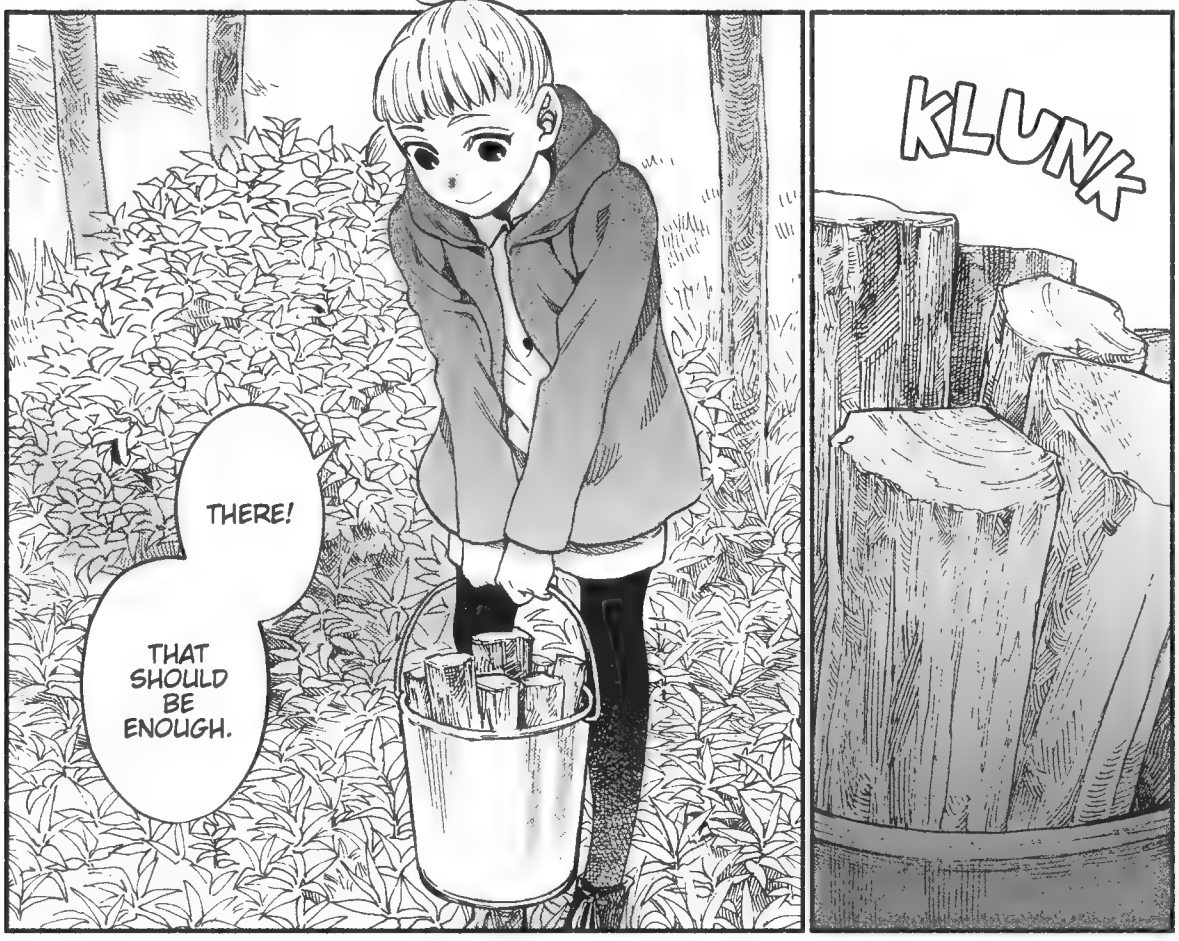
NOM!
MMM! IT'S SO GOOD!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!

THE SEA BREAM IS SCRUMPTIOUS, TOO! THE MEAT'S SO FLUFFY AND JUICY AND DRIPPING WITH SEASONINGS!
YUM! IT MAKES ME WANT EVEN MORE RICE TO GO WITH IT!
Heh.
AREN'T YOU GONNA EAT THAT, MISTER?
SWSH
TOUCH THIS AND I'LL MAKE YOU WORK TO PAY IT OFF.
And that's "Boss" to you..

OHO.
IT GETS DRUNK ON COFFEE, HUH?
THAT'S HOW IT SEEMED.
FASCI-NATING.
Hmmm...
MIND IF I GIVE IT A SIP TO SEE?
HMPH!
UMM, SINCE THAT'LL MAKE ASA START ROLLING AND FLOPPING ALL OVER THE PLACE, I DON'T RECOMMEND DOING IT INSIDE.
THOSE TWO ARE SO WEIRD.
ACHOO !!
HMM. IT'S GOTTEN A BIT NIPPY IN HERE, HASN'T IT?
Only one...
HMM...

OH!
SHOULD I BRING IN SOME FIREWOOD FOR YOU?
I SAW THE STACK ALONG THE SIDE WALL.
WOULD YOU?
WANT ME TO COME?
IT'S OKAY. I CAN CARRY ENOUGH ON MY OWN.
TMPA
TMPA
WAIT RIGHT THERE, ASA. OKAY?
SHE HAS A GOOD HEAD ON HER SHOULDERS.
KREEEE
BTAM
WHEN IT COMES TO CHORES AND STUFF, YEAH.




KLUNK
THERE!
THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.

ACHOO

THE SEA LOOKS SO DIFFERENT FROM UP ON TOP OF A BOAT...
Oooh...
FWIIISH...
HEY.
A BOAT...
.....

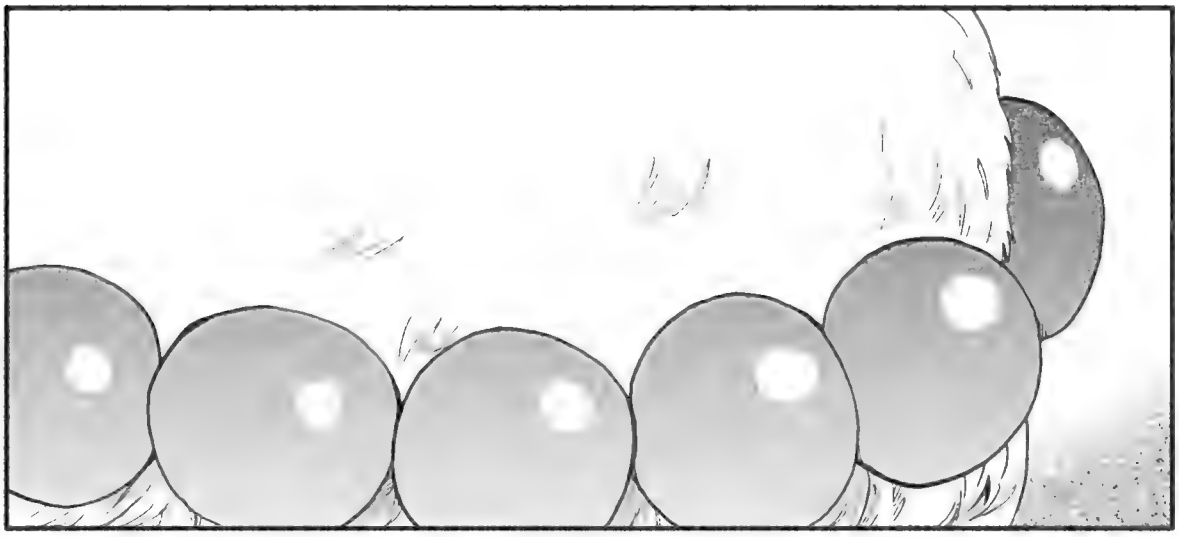
OLEG-SAN...?
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?

DON'T HAVE THAT MONSTER WITH YOU, HUH?
SAW YOU TWO WANDERING AROUND OUT HERE.
ASA IS NOT A MONSTER.
SURE, WHATEVER. ANYWAY, THIS IS PERFECT.

THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK YOU.
ヒロイン ヒロイン ヒロイン

WHAT WAS THAT?
TUG—
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. SHEESH.
MAYBE SHE TRIPPED OVER SOME-THING?
YOU THINK? IS SHE OKAY?

KA-
CHAK
NAGI! YOU OKAY?



Giant Spider & Me: A Post-Apocalyptic Tale 2

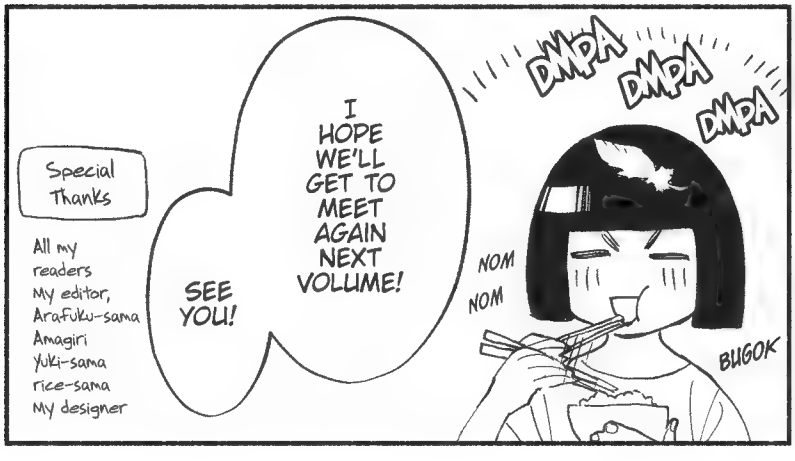
END

Afterword

HELLO THERE!
GIANT SPIDER & ME: A POST-APOCALYPTIC TALE VOLUME 2 IS OUT!
Giant Spider & Me: A Post-Apocalyptic Tale 2
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR BUYING A COPY.

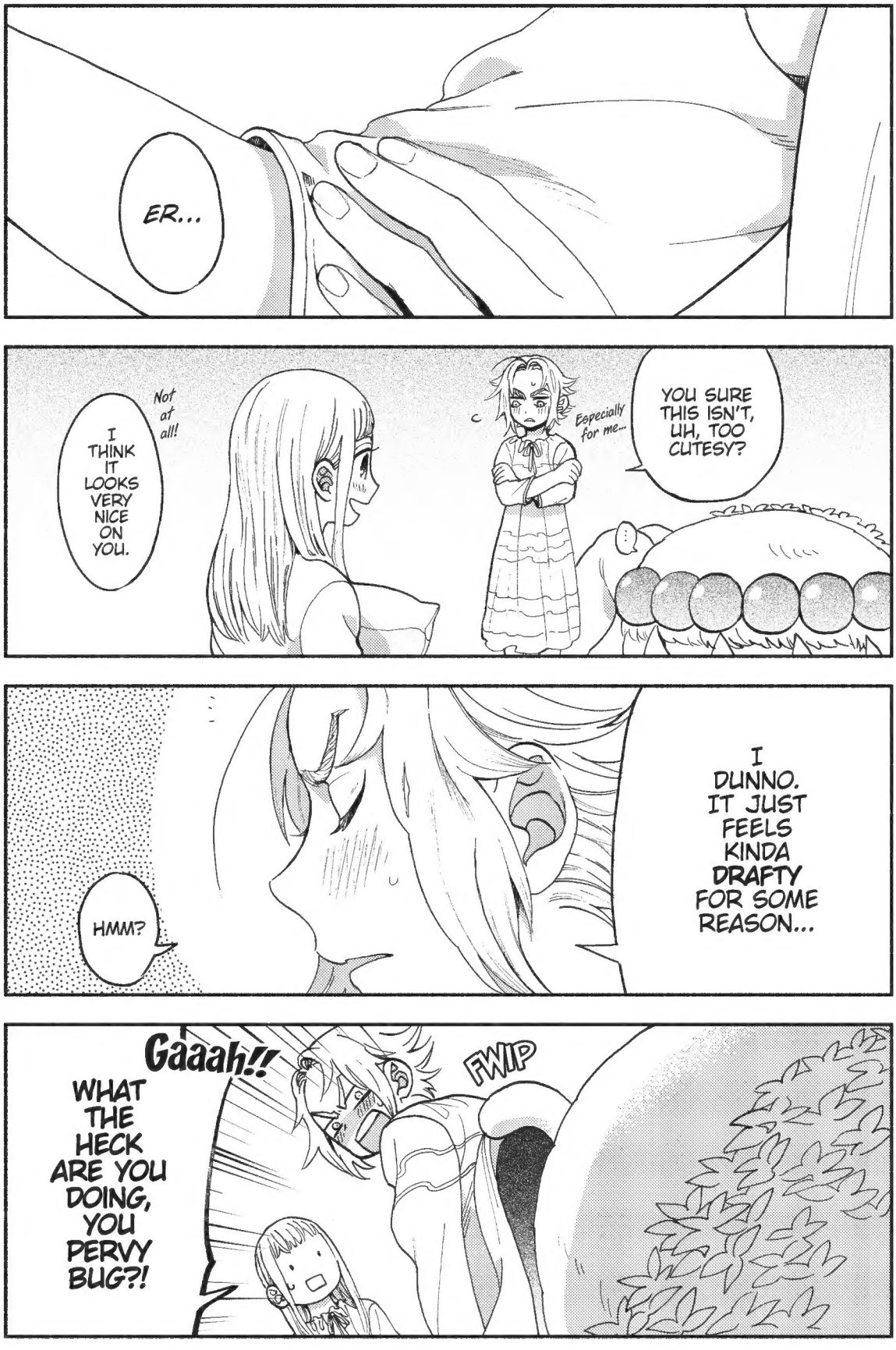
STARE
I BET THERE'S SOMETHING NEW AND EXCITING AROUND EVERY CORNER FOR ASA TO DISCOVER.

AND SUDDENLY THINGS ARE MUCH MORE EXCITING FOR NAGI AND ASA.
WE MET MANY MORE PEOPLE THIS VOLUME...


Special Thanks
All my readers
My editor, Arafuku-sama
Amagiri Yuki-sama
rice-sama
My designer
SEE YOU!
I HOPE WE'LL GET TO MEET AGAIN NEXT VOLUME!
DMPA DMPA DMPA
NOM NOM
BUGOK

BUK BUK BUGOK!
FWUF

From the title page to chapter 6...


ER...
YOU SURE THIS ISN'T, UH, TOO CUTESY?
Especially for me...
I THINK IT LOOKS VERY NICE ON YOU.
Not at all!
I DUNNO. IT JUST FEELS KINDA DRAFTY FOR SOME REASON...
HMM?
Gaaah!!
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING, YOU PERVY BUG?!
FWIP

Zzz...
Zzz...
Mmm...
Nnnh...

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

GIANT SPIDER & ME: A Post-Apocalyptic Tale VOL. 2

story and art by **KIKORI MORINO**

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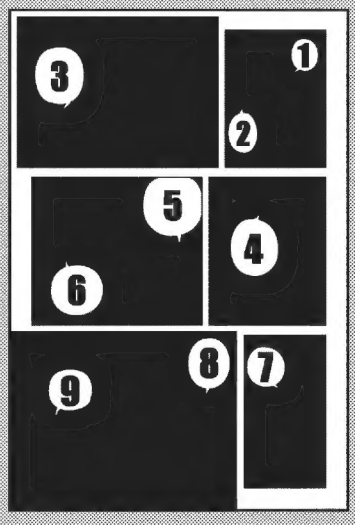
READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



FRIEND OR FIEND? Nagi has befriended Belle and her father, but trouble still abounds. She has a huge hole gaping in her roof, after all! When they take a trip to the morning market to find help, Nagi decides it is the perfect time to introduce Asa to the community. Will the giant spider be greeted with terror or a warm welcome?

TEEN

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